Alexis de Tocqueville

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

ENGLISH EDITION

Edited by Eduardo Nolla

Translated by James T. Schleifer

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DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

Historical-Critical Edition of
De la démocratie en Amérique

Edited by Eduardo Nolla

Translated from the French by James T. Schleifer

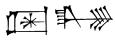
A BILINGUAL FRENCH-ENGLISH EDITION

VOLUME I

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The French text on which this translation is based is *De la démocratie en Amérique,* première édition historico-critique revue et augmentée. Edited by Eduardo Nolla. Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin; 6, Place de la Sorbonne; Paris, 1990. French edition reprinted by permission.

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Printed in the United States of America

14 13 12 11 10 C 5 4 3 2 1
14 13 12 11 10 P 5 4 3 2 1

	Cloth ISBNs	Paperback ISBNs
(Set)	978-0-86597-719-8	978-0-86597-724-2
(Vol. 1)	978-0-86597-720-4	978-0-86597-725-9
(Vol. 2)	978-0-86597-721-1	978-0-86597-726-6
(Vol. 3)	978-0-86597-722-8	978-0-86597-727-3
(Vol. 4)	978-0-86597-723-5	978-0-86597-728-0

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Tocqueville, Alexis de, 1805–1859.
[De la démocratie en Amérique. English & French]
Democracy in America: historical-critical edition of De la démocratie en Amérique/Alexis de Tocqueville; edited by Eduardo Nolla; translated from the French by James T. Schleifer.
p. cm.
"A bilingual French-English edition."
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-86597-719-8 (hc: alk. paper) ISBN 978-0-86597-720-4 (hc: alk. paper)
ISBN 978-0-86597-721-1 (hc: alk. paper) ISBN 978-0-86597-722-8 (hc: alk. paper)
ISBN 978-0-86597-723-5 (hc: alk. paper) ISBN 978-0-86597-724-2 (pbk.: alk. paper)
ISBN 978-0-86597-725-9 (pbk.: alk. paper) ISBN 978-0-86597-726-6 (pbk.: alk. paper)
ISBN 978-0-86597-727-3 (pbk.: alk. paper) ISBN 978-0-86597-728-0 (pbk.: alk. paper)
1. United States—Politics and government. 2. United States—Social conditions.
3. Democracy—United States. I. Nolla, Eduardo. II. Schleifer, James T., 1942–
III. Title.
JK216.T713 2009
320.973—dc22 2008042684

LIBERTY FUND, INC.
8335 Allison Pointe Trail, Suite 300
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250-1684

Contents

Translator's Note xxi

Key Terms xxvi

Foreword xxviii

List of Illustrations xlv

Editor's Introduction xlvii

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA (1835)

VOLUME I

Introduction 3

Part I

CHAPTER 1: Exterior Configuration of North America 33

CHAPTER 2: Of the Point of Departure and Its Importance for the Future of the Anglo-Americans 45

Reasons for Some Singularities That the Laws and Customs of the Anglo-Americans Present 71

CHAPTER 3: Social State of the Anglo-Americans 74

That the Salient Point of the Social State of the Anglo-Americans Is to Be Essentially Democratic 75

Political Consequences of the Social State of the Anglo-Americans 89

CHAPTER 4: Of the Principle of the Sovereignty of the People in America 91

CHAPTER 5: Necessity of Studying What Happens in the Individual States before Speaking about the Government of the Union 98

Of the Town System in America 99

Town District 103

Town Powers in New England 104

Of Town Life 108

Of Town Spirit in New England 110

Of the County in New England 114

Of Administration in New England 115

General Ideas on Administration in the United States 129

Of the State 135

Legislative Power of the State 136

Of the Executive Power of the State 139

Of the Political Effects of Administrative Decentralization in the United States 142

CHAPTER 6: Of the Judicial Power in the United States and Its Action on Political Society 167

Other Powers Granted to American Judges 176

CHAPTER 7: Of Political Jurisdiction in the United States 179

CHAPTER 8: Of the Federal Constitution 186

Historical Background of the Federal Constitution 186

Summary Picture of the Federal Constitution 191

Attributions of the Federal Government 193

Federal Powers 195

Legislative Powers 196
[Difference between the Constitution of the Senate and That of the House of Representatives]

Another Difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives 200
Of Executive Power 201
How the Position of the President of the United States Differs from That of a Constitutional King in France 204
Accidental Causes That Can Increase the Influence of the Executive Power 209
Why the President of the United States, to Lead Public Affairs, Does Not Need to Have a Majority in the Chambers 210
Of the Election of the President 211
Mode of Election 218
Election Crisis 222
Of the Re-election of the President 225
Of the Federal Courts 229
Way of Determining the Jurisdiction of the Federal Courts 234
Different Cases of Jurisdiction 236
The Federal Courts' Way of Proceeding 241
Elevated Rank That the Supreme Court Occupies among the Great Powers of the State 244
How the Federal Constitution Is Superior to the State Constitutions 246
What Distinguishes the Federal Constitution of the United States of America from All Other Federal Constitutions 251
Of the Advantages of the Federal System in General, and of Its Special Utility for America 255
What Keeps the Federal System from Being within the Reach of All Peoples; And What Has Allowed the Anglo-Americans to Adopt It 263

VOLUME II

Part II

CHAPTER 1: How It Can Be Strictly Said That in the United States It Is the People Who Govern 278
CHAPTER 2: Of Parties in the United States 279
Of the Remnants of the Aristocratic Party in the United States 287

CHAPTER 3: Of Freedom of the Press in the United States 289

That the Opinions Established under the Dominion of Freedom of the Press in the United States Are Often More Tenacious than Those That Are Found Elsewhere under the Dominion of Censorship 298

CHAPTER 4: Of Political Association in the United States 302

Different Ways in Which the Right of Association Is Understood in Europe and in the United States, and the Different Use That Is Made of That Right 309

CHAPTER 5: Of the Government of Democracy in America 313

Of Universal Suffrage 313

Of the Choices of the People and of the Instincts of American Democracy in Its Choices 314

Of the Causes That Can Partially Correct These Democratic Instincts 318

Influence That American Democracy Has Exercised on Electoral Laws 322

Of Public Officials under the Dominion of American Democracy 324

Of the Arbitrariness of Magistrates under the Dominion of American Democracy 327

Administrative Instability in the United States 331

Of Public Expenses under the Dominion of American Democracy 333

Of the Instincts of American Democracy in Determining the Salary of Officials 340

Difficulty of Discerning the Causes That Lead the American Government to Economy 343

[Influence of the Government of Democracy on the Tax Base and on the Use of the Tax Revenues] 345

[Influence of Democratic Government on the Use of Tax Revenues] 346

Can the Public Expenditures of the United States Be Compared with Those of France 349

Of the Corruption and Vices of Those Who Govern in Democracy; Of the Effects on Public Morality That Result from That Corruption and Those Vices 356

Of What Efforts Democracy Is Capable 360

Of the Power That American Democracy Generally Exercises over Itself 364

Of the Manner in Which American Democracy Conducts the Foreign Affairs of the State 366

CHAPTER 6: What Are the Real Advantages That American Society Gains from the Government of Democracy? 375

Of the General Tendency of Laws under the Dominion of American Democracy, and Of the Instinct of Those Who Apply Them 377

Of Public Spirit in the United States 384

Of the Idea of Rights in the United States 389

Of the Respect for the Law in the United States 393

Activity That Reigns in All Parts of the Political Body in the United States; Influence That It Exercises on Society 395

CHAPTER 7: Of the Omnipotence of the Majority in the United States and Its Effects 402

How the Omnipotence of the Majority in America Increases the Legislative and Administrative Instability That Is Natural to Democracies 407

Tyranny of the Majority 410

Effects of the Omnipotence of the Majority on the Arbitrariness of American Public Officials 415

Of the Power Exercised by the Majority in America over Thought 416

Effect of Tyranny of the Majority on the National Character of the Americans; Of the Courtier Spirit in the United States 420

That the Greatest Danger to the American Republics Comes from the Omnipotence of the Majority 424

CHAPTER 8: Of What Tempers Tyranny of the Majority in the United States 427

Absence of Administrative Centralization 427

Of the Spirit of the Jurist in the United States, and How It Serves as Counterweight to Democracy 430

Of the Jury in the United States Considered as a Political Institution 442

CHAPTER 9: Of the Principal Causes That Tend to Maintain the Democratic Republic in the United States 451

Of the Accidental or Providential Causes That Contribute to Maintaining the Democratic Republic in the United States 452

Of the Influence of Laws on Maintaining the Democratic Republic in the United States 465

Of the Influence of Mores on Maintaining the Democratic Republic in the United States 466

Of Religion Considered as a Political Institution, How It Serves Powerfully to Maintain the Democratic Republic among the Americans 467

Indirect Influence Exercised by Religious Beliefs on Political Society in the United States 472

Of the Principal Causes That Make Religion Powerful in America 478

How the Enlightenment, Habits, and Practical Experience of the Americans Contribute to the Success of Democratic Institutions 488

That Laws Serve More to Maintain the Democratic Republic in the United States than Physical Causes, and Mores More than Laws 494

Would Laws and Mores Be Sufficient to Maintain Democratic Institutions Elsewhere than in America? 500

Importance of What Precedes in Relation to Europe 505

CHAPTER 10: Some Considerations on the Present State and Probable Future of the Three Races That Inhabit the Territory of the United States 515

Present State and Probable Future of the Indian Tribes That Inhabit the Territory Possessed by the Union 522

Position That the Black Race Occupies in the United States; Dangers to Which Its Presence Exposes the Whites 548

What Are the Chances for the American Union to Last? What Dangers Threaten It? 582

Of Republican Institutions in the United States, What Are Their Chances of Lasting? 627

Some Considerations on the Causes of the Commercial Greatness of the United States 637

Conclusion 649

Notes 658

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA
(1840)

VOLUME III

Part I: Influence of Democracy on the Intellectual Movement in the United States

CHAPTER 1: Of the Philosophical Method of the Americans 697

CHAPTER 2: Of the Principal Source of Beliefs among Democratic Peoples 711

CHAPTER 3: Why the Americans Show More Aptitude and Taste for General Ideas than Their Fathers the English 726

CHAPTER 4: Why the Americans Have Never Been as Passionate as the French about General Ideas in Political Matters 737

CHAPTER 5: How, in the United States, Religion Knows How to Make Use of Democratic Instincts 742

CHAPTER 6: Of the Progress of Catholicism in the United States 754

CHAPTER 7: What Makes the Minds of Democratic Peoples Incline toward Pantheism 757

CHAPTER 8: How Equality Suggests to the Americans the Idea of the Indefinite Perfectibility of Man 759

CHAPTER 9: How the Example of the Americans Does Not Prove That a Democratic People Cannot Have Aptitude and Taste for the Sciences, Literature, and the Arts 763

CHAPTER 10: Why the Americans Are More Attached to the Application of the Sciences than to the Theory 775

CHAPTER 11: In What Spirit the Americans Cultivate the Arts 788

CHAPTER 12: Why Americans Erect Such Small and Such Large Monuments at the Same Time 796

CHAPTER 13: Literary Physiognomy of Democratic Centuries 800

CHAPTER 14: Of the Literary Industry 813

CHAPTER 15: Why the Study of Greek and Latin Literature Is Particularly Useful in Democratic Societies 815

CHAPTER 16: How American Democracy Has Modified the English Language 818

CHAPTER 17: Of Some Sources of Poetry among Democratic Nations 830

CHAPTER 18: Why American Writers and Orators Are Often Bombastic 843

CHAPTER 19: Some Observations on the Theater of Democratic Peoples 845

CHAPTER 20: Of Some Tendencies Particular to Historians in Democratic Centuries 853

CHAPTER 21: Of Parliamentary Eloquence in the United States 861

Part II: Influence of Democracy on the Sentiments of the Americans

CHAPTER 1: Why Democratic Peoples Show a More Ardent and More Enduring Love for Equality than for Liberty 872

CHAPTER 2: Of Individualism in Democratic Countries 881

CHAPTER 3: How Individualism Is Greater at the End of a Democratic Revolution than at Another Time 885

CHAPTER 4: How the Americans Combat Individualism with Free Institutions 887

CHAPTER 5: Of the Use That Americans Make of Association in Civil Life 895

CHAPTER 6: Of the Relation between Associations and Newspapers 905

CHAPTER 7: Relations between Civil Associations and Political Associations 911

CHAPTER 8: How the Americans Combat Individualism by the Doctrine of Interest Well Understood 918

CHAPTER 9: How the Americans Apply the Doctrine of Interest Well Understood in the Matter of Religion 926

CHAPTER 10: Of the Taste for Material Well-Being in America 930

CHAPTER 11: Of the Particular Effects Produced by the Love of Material Enjoyments in Democratic Centuries 935

CHAPTER 12: Why Certain Americans Exhibit So Excited a Spiritualism 939

CHAPTER 13: Why the Americans Appear So Restless Amid Their Well-Being 942

CHAPTER 14: How the Taste for Material Enjoyment Is United, among the Americans, with the Love of Liberty and Concern for Public Affairs 948

CHAPTER 15: How from Time to Time Religious Beliefs Divert the Soul of the Americans toward Non-material Enjoyments 954

CHAPTER 16: How the Excessive Love of Well-Being Can Harm Well-Being 963

CHAPTER 17: How, in Times of Equality and Doubt, It Is Important to Push Back the Goal of Human Actions 965

CHAPTER 18: Why, among the Americans, All Honest Professions Are Considered Honorable 969

CHAPTER 19: What Makes Nearly All Americans Tend toward Industrial Professions 972

CHAPTER 20: How Aristocracy Could Emerge from Industry 980

VOLUME IV

Part III: Influence of Democracy on Mores Properly So Called

CHAPTER 1: How Mores Become Milder as Conditions Become Equal 987

CHAPTER 2: How Democracy Makes the Habitual Relations of the Americans Simpler and Easier 995

CHAPTER 3: Why the Americans Have So Little Susceptibility in Their Country and Show Such Susceptibility in Ours 1000

CHAPTER 4: Consequences of the Three Preceding Chapters 1005

CHAPTER 5: How Democracy Modifies the Relationships of Servant and Master 1007

CHAPTER 6: How Democratic Institutions and Mores Tend to Raise the Cost and Shorten the Length of Leases 1020

CHAPTER 7: Influence of Democracy on Salaries 1025

CHAPTER 8: Influence of Democracy on the Family 1031

CHAPTER 9: Education of Young Girls in the United States 1041

CHAPTER 10: How the Young Girl Is Found Again in the Features of the Wife 1048

CHAPTER 11: How Equality of Conditions Contributes to Maintaining Good Morals in America 1052

CHAPTER 12: How the Americans Understand the Equality of Man and of Woman 1062

CHAPTER 13: How Equality Divides the Americans Naturally into a Multitude of Small Particular Societies 1068

CHAPTER 14: Some Reflections on American Manners 1071

CHAPTER 15: Of the Gravity of Americans and Why It Does Not Prevent Them from Often Doing Thoughtless Things 1080

CHAPTER 16: Why the National Vanity of the Americans Is More Anxious and More Quarrelsome than That of the English 1085

CHAPTER 17: How the Appearance of Society in the United States Is at the Very Same Time Agitated and Monotonous 1089

CHAPTER 18: Of Honor in the United States and in Democratic Societies 1093

CHAPTER 19: Why in the United States You Find So Many Ambitious Men and So Few Great Ambitions 1116

CHAPTER 20: Of Positions Becoming an Industry among Certain Democratic Nations 1129

CHAPTER 21: Why Great Revolutions Will Become Rare 1133

CHAPTER 22: Why Democratic Peoples Naturally Desire Peace and Democratic Armies Naturally Desire War 1153

CHAPTER 23: Which Class, in Democratic Armies, Is the Most Warlike and the Most Revolutionary 1165

CHAPTER 24: What Makes Democratic Armies Weaker than Other Armies while Beginning a Military Campaign and More Formidable When the War Is Prolonged 1170

CHAPTER 25: Of Discipline in Democratic Armies 1176

CHAPTER 26: Some Considerations on War in Democratic Societies 1178

Part IV: Of the Influence That Democratic Ideas and Sentiments Exercise on Political Society

CHAPTER 1: Equality Naturally Gives Men the Taste for Free Institutions 1191

CHAPTER 2: That the Ideas of Democratic Peoples in Matters of Government Naturally Favor the Concentration of Powers 1194

CHAPTER 3: That the Sentiments of Democratic Peoples Are in Agreement with Their Ideas for Bringing Them to Concentrate Power 1200

CHAPTER 4: Of Some Particular and Accidental Causes That End Up Leading a Democratic People to Centralize Power or That Turn Them Away from Doing So 1206

CHAPTER 5: That among the European Nations of Today the Sovereign Power Increases although Sovereigns Are Less Stable 1221

CHAPTER 6: What Type of Despotism Democratic Nations Have to Fear 1245

CHAPTER 7: Continuation of the Preceding Chapters 1262

CHAPTER 8: General View of the Subject 1278

Notes 1286

Appendixes 1295

APPENDIX 1: Journey to Lake Oneida 1295

APPENDIX 2: A Fortnight in the Wilderness 1303

APPENDIX 3: Sects in America 1360

APPENDIX 4: Political Activity in America 1365

APPENDIX 5: Letter of Alexis de Tocqueville to Charles Stoffels 1368

APPENDIX 6: Foreword to the Twelfth Edition 1373

Works Used by Tocqueville 1376

Bibliography 1396

Index 1499

Translator's Note

This new translation of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* is intended to be a close, faithful, and straightforward rendering of Tocqueville into contemporary American English. A second key goal is to present a smooth, readable version of Tocqueville's classic work. Part of my challenge has therefore been to maintain the right balance between closeness and felicity, between faithfulness and readability.

The translation scrupulously follows Tocqueville's somewhat idiosyncratic paragraphing and attempts to reflect the varied sentence structure of the original. I have tried, where possible, to follow Tocqueville's sentence structure and word order. But in many cases this effort would be inappropriate and untenable. It would not work for constructing sentences in English and would obscure Tocqueville's meaning. So sometimes I have shifted Tocqueville's word order and rearranged, even totally recast, his sentences. At times, for example, Tocqueville's extraordinarily long sentences, built from accumulated phrases, had to be broken to fit English usage. Nonetheless, the translation tries to reflect Tocqueville's stylistic mix of long, complex sentences with short, emphatic ones. Occasionally Tocqueville's sentence fragments are retained; more often, I have turned them into complete (though still very brief) sentences by inserting a verb.

As part of the effort to achieve a contemporary American English text, I have avoided translating the French *on* as *one;* almost invariably, I have used *you* (sometimes *we* or another pronoun, depending on context), or have changed the sentence from active to passive. And with the goal of closeness in mind, I have also used cognates where they fit and are appropriate.

Another basic principle for this translation has been consistency, espe-

cially for key terms. But a rigid or narrow consistency can be a false and dangerous goal, even a trap. Words often have many meanings and therefore need to be translated differently depending on context. There are several good examples. *Objet* can mean object (the object of desire), subject (the subject under consideration), matter (the matter under discussion), or objective (the objective of a plan). *Biens* can mean property or goods, or the opposite of evil(s): good, good things, or even, on a few occasions, advantages. And *désert* can mean wilderness, uninhabited area, or desert. The reader will find other examples of such clusters of possible meanings in the translation. But for the key terms used by Tocqueville, the principle has been to be as consistent as possible. (See Key Terms.)

Finally, the translation follows these more specific principles: (1) words referring specifically to France, to French institutions and history, such as *commune, conseil d'état, parlement,* are usually left in French; (2) quotations presented by Tocqueville from Pascal, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Guizot, and many other French writers have been newly translated; (3) on a few occasions, specific translator's notes have been inserted; (4) the French *De* at the beginning of chapter or section titles has been retained and translated invariably as *Of* (eg. *Of the Point of Departure . . .*). The great exception, of course, is the name of the book itself, *Democracy in America,* a title simply too familiar in English to be altered; and (5) in cases where Tocqueville quotes directly and closely from an English-language source, the original English text has been provided; but in cases where Tocqueville has quoted an English-language source from a French translation, or has only paraphrased or followed an English text very loosely, Tocqueville has been translated.

The Nolla edition, on which this translation is based, presents an enormous amount and variety of materials from the drafts and manuscript variants of Tocqueville's work, as well as excerpts from closely related materials such as travel notes and correspondence, and several chapters or partial chapters never included in the published text.

Within this collection of drafts, variants, and other materials there exists an important, but not always clear, hierarchy of manuscript materials.

These layers largely reflect chronology, the development over time of Tocqueville's thinking from early notes and sketches, through successive draft versions, to final text (still often overlaid with last-minute thoughts, queries, and clarifications). But they also reflect the tangled paths of his musings, including intellectual trials, asides, and dead ends.

And from these diverse materials comes a major challenge for the translator: to reflect the stylistic and chronological shifts from early to late, from informal to formal, from rough to polished versions of Tocqueville's book. In some of the drafts, especially, the translation must try to reproduce Tocqueville's tentativeness and confusion, as reflected in incomplete, broken, or ambiguous sentences. Most important, the many layers of text need to be translated in a way that maintains parallel phrasing, but at the same time reflects key variations in wording as they occur in the unfolding development of Tocqueville's work. The various stages of manuscript variants and the final text need to match, to be harmonious where they are more or less the same, and to differ where Tocqueville has made significant changes in vocabulary or meaning.

The very act of translation teaches a great deal about the author being translated. Tocqueville, like all good writers, had certain stylistic characteristics and idiosyncrasies that a translator must grasp in order to render a faithful translation.

In general, Tocqueville's sentences are much more dense and compact in volume I of *Democracy* than in volume II, where they are more abstract and open. In the first volume, his sentences often seem stuffed with short, qualifying phrases. This difference results from the more abstract and reflective nature of the second volume, but it also arises from the more detailed, concrete, and historical subject matter that takes up much of volume I.

Tocqueville often painted verbal pictures to summarize and to express his ideas in a single image that he hoped would grab and even persuade his readers. To create these images, he repeatedly used certain clusters of related words. Among his favorite word pictures, for example, are images of light and darkness, of eyes and seeing, of shadows and fading light;

images of movement, motion or stirring; dramatic images of rising floodwaters or raging rivers; and such geometric images as the circle, the sphere, and converging beams or roads. I have been careful to reproduce these word pictures as faithfully as possible. Examples occur throughout the *Democracy.*

A key to Tocqueville's writing is his reliance on parallel structures: parallel or matched sentences, phrases, or even words. I have tried to retain such parallels, because they reveal how Tocqueville thought habitually in pairs, especially in contrasting pairs, a feature of his thinking that elsewhere I have called "pairs in tension."

Still another key to Tocqueville's writing is its very deductive, even syllogistic nature. This is one of the defining characteristics of his thought. In the *Democracy,* he frequently offers deductive sets of ideas, expressed in chains of paragraphs or sentences, or even in chains of phrases within a single, long sentence. Many segments of his book are essentially elaborate syllogisms. In an attempt to carry the reader along by the sheer force of logic, Tocqueville often presents his ideas as a tight logical sequence: *since . . . , and since . . . , so;* or *this . . . , moreover this . . . , therefore* (*Donc* and *ainsi* are two of his favorite words, especially in volume I.) Again, as translator, I have attempted to retain this syllogistic flavor.

Acknowledgments

My work as translator has benefited greatly from the careful readings and suggestions of several individuals: my initial reader, Alison Pedicord Schleifer; my primary reader, Paul Seaton; the other members of the editorial committee, Peter Lawler, Pierre Manent, Catherine Zuckert, Eduardo Nolla, and Christine Henderson, Senior Fellow at Liberty Fund. I would also like to thank Melvin Richter and David Bovenizer, who were involved in the early phases of the project, and Emilio Pacheco, executive vice president of Liberty Fund, who provided constant support throughout the project. I extend my deepest appreciation to all for their insights, attention, support, and good will along the way. This project has made us colleagues and friends.

The resulting translation is mine, and I take full responsibility for any weaknesses or failings.

James T. Schleifer
New Haven 2007

Key Terms

Certain key terms used by Tocqueville present particular translation difficulties. Some, for example, have no precise English equivalent (e.g., *lumières*); others are extremely abstract or have a variety of meanings, depending on context. As translator, my goal was to choose the best alternative and then to be consistent throughout the edition. The following terms should be noted:

- *état social*—translated closely as *social state,* instead of *social condition.*
- *idée mère*—translated as either *generative* or *main idea.* The same principle is used for *pensée mère, passion mère,* etc. But *science mère* is rendered as *mother science.*
- *inquiétude*—usually translated as *restlessness* (and *inquiet* as *restless*), but sometimes it can be *concern* or *worry.* Earlier French dictionaries show that traditionally the word meant primarily an inability to be at rest, or restlessness; the more modern sense of worry or concern was not as important. A closely related word, *agitation,* is almost always rendered as the cognate, *agitation,* except occasionally when it is translated as *constant motion* or *constant movement.*
- *intérêt bien entendu*—translated as *interest well understood* or *well understood interest,* rather than *interest properly understood, self-interest properly/well understood,* or *enlightened self-interest,* all of which are unnecessary glosses on the meaning.
- *liberté d'écrire*—In English, for freedom of written expression, there is no equivalent such as freedom of speech for freedom of spoken expression; freedom of the press is a more specific term. So for *liberté d'écrire,* I have simply used *freedom to write.* Related terms to note include *liberté de penser, freedom of thought,* and *liberté d'esprit, freedom of mind* (in the sense of intellectual freedom).

- *lumières*—usually translated as *enlightenment,* occasionally as *knowledge* or *learning.*
- *mœurs*—translated as *mores,* not an ideal word, but the best available option in English.
- *pouvoir d'un seul*—translated as *power of one man* or, occasionally, *power of one man alone,* rather than *power of a single man,* which is ambiguous.

In addition, the following less crucial, but still important words should be noted:

- *affaires*—almost always translated as *public affairs,* unless clearly otherwise (such as *matters*).
- *empire*—translated as *dominion,* or a few times, as *sway* or *rule.*
- *État*—translated as *State* (upper case) when referring to the nation, the general political body; otherwise, *state* (lower case) when referring to one of the American states.
- *fonctionnaire*—translated as *officer* when related to the American town (town officer); otherwise, *official.*
- *intelligences*—No good English equivalent exists; usually translated as *minds;* sometimes the phrase is altered to use the adjective *intellectual.*
- *la justice*—In certain chapters of Tocqueville's book the word means *justice,* but usually it means the *judicial system* or *court system.*
- *législateur*—translated as *law-maker* when Tocqueville is talking about the maker of fundamental law, the constitution-maker; otherwise, *legislator.*
- *patrie*—translated as *native land* or *country,* rather than *fatherland* or *homeland.*
- *sauvage*—either *savage* or *wild,* depending on the context.
- *solitudes*—closely related to *désert(s)* (see Translator's Note, p. xxii); usually translated as *uninhabited* (or *empty*) *places* (or *areas*), sometimes as *wilderness,* and once or twice as *solitude* or *seclusion.*

Foreword

"In this regard, you will pardon me, I hope, if I express a regret that I believe is general. You have pushed too far a scruple, otherwise very laudable, of not wanting to publish anything that had not absolutely received the final touch of the author. I know well the conscientiousness that caused our friend to present the expression of his thought to the public only after he had brought it to the highest perfection that he felt capable of giving it; but it is one thing to put a piece of writing aside in order to make it more perfect and something else to want it suppressed when fate has decreed that the process of perfecting it cannot take place. Even the rough drafts of a thinker and observer like Tocqueville would be of inestimable value for thinkers to come; and unless he opposed it while alive, it seems to me that there would be no disadvantage in publishing his imperfect manuscripts while presenting them only for what they are and scrupulously retaining all the indications of an intention to go back to some piece and to submit its ideas to a later verification."[1]

In these words, following the publication of the complete works, John Stuart Mill expressed his regret to the editor, Gustave de Beaumont, for not having been able to read the whole body of Tocqueville's unpublished papers.

Within the framework of this edition, I wanted to revisit Beaumont's decision and in part to satisfy Mill's desire. I have resolved not only to offer to the reader the text of *Democracy in America* revised and corrected, but also to give an important place to the notes, drafts, and materials of all kinds that accompanied the period of its writing.

I have therefore chosen to present to the reader at the same time a new

1. *The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill, 1849–1873* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972. *J. S. Mill Collected Works,* XV), p. 719. [Note: Original is in French.]

edition of the *Democracy* and a *different* edition. This new *Democracy* is not only the one that Tocqueville presented to the reader of 1835 and then to the reader of 1840. It is enlarged, amplified by a body of texts that has never existed in the form that I give it today. If the added pages that follow are indeed from Tocqueville's pen, most of them existed only as support, as necessary scaffolding for the construction of the work. As such, they were naturally meant to disappear from the final version.

Drawn out of obscurity, they are going to reappear in the middle of the known text. These fragments, revived by the choice of the editor, appear between brackets in the main text and in notes. They must be treated with caution. Although they have been brought back to life here, it is advisable not to forget that Tocqueville had condemned them to disappearance. If they often lead to some interesting site, they also lead many times to a labyrinth or to an impenetrable wall. Then we will be forced to agree with the judgment that once relegated them to oblivion.

What interest does their presence have then? Above all that of vividly highlighting the extraordinary complexity of the writing of the *Democracy* and aiding in its comprehension by presenting a portion of the erasures and over-writings, the prodigious "layering" of Tocqueville's great work. The reader will discover, for example, how Tocqueville, often hesitant, uncertain about the direction to follow, asks for advice from his family and friends, and how the latter guide his thought when writing some paragraphs and sentences. He will better understand the reasons for certain additions and deletions. He will also be able to note certain changes due to the criticisms made by the first readers of the manuscript. Finally and above all, he will see how Tocqueville proceeded with the elaboration of the main ideas of his book.

Every text is unstable for a long time. When it has acquired a certain coherence and the author judges it complete, it is printed. Every typographic reproduction leads, however, to adulteration, an adulteration as necessary as it is inevitable. The printed book cannot convey either the handwriting or the look of the manuscript. Only a facsimile, a perfect reproduction of the original, made on the same paper, damaged by time and humidity, would manage to show to the reader *Democracy in America* in all its complexity and liveliness. But it would be an illusory *Democracy,*

entirely as hard to read and grasp as the original, and one whose intrinsic value would be lost.

If the edition that is being presented today is careful to restore to the *Democracy* part of its difficulties of composition, of its mistaken ideas, and of its faltering efforts, it is not trying to and cannot in any way take the place of the manuscript, any more than it can come close to being a facsimile. A good number of research projects will still have to return to the unique object that the manuscript represents.[2]

The Manuscripts of Tocqueville

The preparation of the first edition of the complete works goes back to 1859, and comes just after the death of Tocqueville. The work of Gustave de Beaumont, who held Tocqueville's manuscripts from his widow, Mary Mottley, was done with the aid of Louis de Kergorlay.

Beaumont knew Tocqueville's obsession to publish nothing that had not been read and reread a hundred times. Since the author was no longer there to ensure the correction of his texts, Beaumont took charge of it. In so doing, he doctored certain passages; he deleted certain others without indication; and finally he destroyed an indeterminate number of documents (perhaps in response to the demands of Tocqueville's wife).

That first edition, which elicited considerable criticism, possesses almost as many good qualities as failings. We know that the editorial practices of the period differed markedly from ours, that mutilations and corrections of all sorts did not as clearly give rise to condemnation. Some of the people cited in the correspondence were still alive at the time of publication. Fi-

2. The working manuscript of *Democracy in America* is at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University. It is divided among four boxes (with the classification CVIa) and follows the order of chapters of the book. Only chapters 1, 18, 19, and 20 of the second part of the 1840 volume are missing. When, for this edition, I refer to the manuscript, it is this text that I mean.

The Yale collection does not have the definitive version of the *Democracy,* the one that Tocqueville had sent to the publisher, Charles Gosselin. This version, which George W. Pierson believed that he had seen in France in 1930, was not found at the time of the purchase of the manuscripts of the *Democracy* in 1954. Everything suggests that this final version did not present perceptible differences from the first edition.

nally, the political situation of the Second Empire weighed on the decision of the editor to make a certain number of modifications.

It is no less true that Beaumont provided an impressive work in a relatively short time. Nine volumes appeared in the space of seven years.

Mary Mottley died in 1865. Since her relations with the Tocqueville family were never good, she bequeathed all of her husband's papers to Gustave de Beaumont. The family of the latter possessed them until 1891. At that time Christian de Tocqueville acquired them.

Not long after the end of the First World War, Paul Lambert White, professor at Yale University, became interested in Tocqueville's manuscripts. He went to France, where he consulted and catalogued all of the manuscripts in the possession of the Tocqueville family. Moreover, he obtained the authorization to have the manuscripts that concerned America copied. M. Bonnel, the schoolteacher at Tocqueville, was charged with this work.[3]

At the death of Paul White, George W. Pierson, then a doctoral student at Yale, went in turn to France with the encouragement of John M. S. Allison. He proceeded to do a new catalogue of the manuscripts[4] and obtained the money necessary for the continuation of the work of copying. In this way Bonnel continued to work and to send copies regularly to the United States.

Several years after World War II, a new inventory revealed the disappearance of most of the manuscripts copied for the American university by Bonnel. Yale found itself from that time on in possession of invaluable documents.

Little by little, the collection grew, augmented over the years by new acquisitions and bequests. One of the most important contributions was the purchase, over a period of about twenty years (from 1953 to 1973), of the quasi-totality of the manuscripts of Gustave de Beaumont. In 1954, Yale acquired the manuscript and the final drafts of *Democracy in America.*

3. White also gained permission to have copies made of certain documents in the hands of Antoine Rédier who was then preparing his book, *Comme disait Monsieur de Tocqueville* (Paris: Perrin, 1925). These copies were done by the secretaries of Abel Doysié, responsible for copying for the Library of Congress documents belonging to the French diplomatic archives.

4. Yale owns copies of all of the catalogues of Tocqueville's manuscripts.

At that time, the American university became the sole depository of the vast majority of the texts, notes, and correspondence relating to Tocqueville's principal work.[5]

The collection holds original manuscripts as well as copies of lost originals. In the work of this edition, the drafts and the manuscript called the "working manuscript" of the *Democracy* have received particular attention.

The greater part of the drafts of the second part of the *Democracy,* to which the author gave the name "rubish"[6] and which constitutes perhaps the most interesting portion of the Yale collection, is unfortunately in very bad condition. Insects and moisture have led to its deterioration, the handwriting is particularly hard to read, and the paper is crumbling into pieces. A quantity of minuscule bits of paper remains at the bottom of the two boxes that protect the Rubish.[7]

Other drafts of the second part of the book, and all those belonging to the first part, exist only as copies (that all together number about 1,500 pages divided into sixteen notebooks); they can be relatively trusted.[8]

To all of that, the notes written by Tocqueville during his journey to America[9] must be added, and a group of more than three hundred letters,

5. The other important collection of Tocqueville's manuscripts is at the château de Tocqueville.

6. The English *rubbish* means debris, remnants, trash. Following Tocqueville, we spell the word incorrectly throughout this edition. By the word, we mean either the drafts of each chapter (*rubish*), or the whole body of the drafts of the second part (*Rubish*).

7. Some omissions could be filled in by consulting the microfilm done at the time of the arrival of the manuscript at Yale and a partial copy of the *Rubish* in Bonnel's hand.

8. The comparison of this copy of one part of the *Rubish* with the original shows some differences and omissions, as well as a certain arbitrariness in the placement of the text on the page. Bonnel also resorted, perhaps a bit too rapidly, to the expedient of "illegible word," although this type of abuse is more desirable in a copyist than is an excess of imagination. I have corrected a number of obvious errors.

9. These notes have been published in the fifth volume of the *Œuvres complètes* published by Gallimard. I have nonetheless preferred to refer to the Yale texts, given the presence in that edition, on more than one occasion, of differences and omissions.

some still unpublished. This involves Tocqueville's and Beaumont's correspondence with Americans and the English during and after their visit to the United States, and letters written to their families and to various French correspondents.[10]

Other documents that are of interest for understanding the *Democracy* include bibliographies, lists of questions posed by Tocqueville and Beaumont to the Americans they spoke to, and above all, numerous documents in Beaumont's hand for the writing of his novel, *Marie, ou l'esclavage aux États-Unis,* and for that of his essay on Ireland.

Some Details Concerning the Present Edition

Theodore Sedgwick, a correspondent of Tocqueville, said jokingly that the handwriting of the latter oscillated between hieroglyphics and cuneiform.[11] The condition of notes meant by Tocqueville to be read only by himself can be imagined.

Following a system frequently used at the time, the draft occupies the right side of the folio and leaves the left side free for notes and variants.[12] The text, nonetheless, often extends beyond the right side and successively invades the left side, the margins, and the space between the lines.

Supplementary sheets are added at the end of each chapter, small pieces of paper are glued over the original, and sometimes other papers are even

10. The letters sent by Beaumont to his family during the American voyage have been published by André Jardin and George W. Pierson with the title *Lettres d'Amérique* (Paris: PUF, 1973).

11. In a letter of 15 January 1856 (YTC, DIIa).

In a letter of 28 December 1856 to the countess de Grancey (*OCB,* VII, p. 424), Tocqueville makes the Abbé Lesueur responsible for his bad handwriting: "He had the singular idea of making me learn to write before teaching me spelling. Since I did not know how to write my words, I muddled them as well as I could, drowning my errors in my scribbling. As a result, I have never known how to spell perfectly, and I have continued to scribble indefinitely." We know, moreover, that Didot, the first publisher of *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution,* sent the manuscript back to the author twice in succession because of illegibility.

12. In certain cases, I have reproduced the notes in pencil that are in Tocqueville's hand.

stuck to the first ones. Crosses, *x*'s, ovals, circles, letters, and diacritical signs are multiplied to indicate transfers and additions. It is clear that an exact reproduction of the many minor changes in the text of the manuscript is as unnecessary as it would be boring, and I have not bothered with it.

Notes in the margin testify to Tocqueville's doubts about certain passages, his desire to review them, and sometimes his intention to ask for the opinion of his friends or their criticisms. The fragments that he intended to eliminate are generally circled.

At the point of finishing the composition of *Democracy in America,* Tocqueville wanted his family and certain of his friends to be able to read the manuscript, comment on it, and critique it. With this intention, in 1834, he hired the services of a copyist.[13] This copy of the manuscript, which could have been sent to the publisher once definitively corrected, has been lost except for a few loose sheets that are found with the manuscript. The reading of these pages reveals the difficulties experienced by the copyist; it is probable, from several notes in the manuscript, that Tocqueville himself dictated a good part of the book.[14]

References made elsewhere give an idea[15] of this copy, which contained a certain number of errors, as did, we can assume, the copy that constituted

13. Perhaps Monsieur Parier, cited in note o of p. 384. A letter of Édouard to Alexis de Tocqueville (CIIIb, 2, pp. 65–67, reproduced in note c of pp. 142–43) suggests the idea that the copy was done in notebooks. Two notes in the drafts speak about the price of the copies and the number of pages copied (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 17, and CVh, 2, p. 11).

In a letter to Beaumont of 23 October 1839 (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 389), Tocqueville refers to a copy of the second volume.

14. On the jacket of chapter VII of the fourth part of volume II, we read, for example: twenty minutes. Is this an allusion to the time taken to read the chapter?

15. The commentaries from the Tocqueville family, from Gustave de Beaumont, and from Louis de Kergorlay often reproduce the fragments to which they are referring. Most of the commentaries of the first readers of Tocqueville's book relate to details of writing, style, and the vocabulary used. Of course, I have reproduced at the bottom of the page only those criticisms that seemed of some theoretical interest.

the final version sent to the publisher. The printing process inevitably introduced others.[16]

The editions that followed worked to correct the errors of the first edition, but added new ones. For his part, Tocqueville also made certain deletions and several additions.[17]

At the time of the preparation of this edition, I began by comparing the most important French editions (those of 1835, 1838, 1840, and 1850). I discovered a certain number of differences from one edition to another: corrections by the author, modifications of punctuation, omissions, etc. After recovering the missing passages, I then compared the whole text with the manuscript and identified more than a hundred diverse errors. To those, some errors made by Tocqueville had to be added. For the latter, I have merely pointed out the error; I tried to correct it if possible, but I have not in any way modified the text.

I then incorporated the fragments that I chose into the known text.[18] To do this, a meticulous selection of texts was made among the multiple var-

16. For example, where Tocqueville wanted to say that "aristocratic countries are full of rich and influential individuals who know how to be self-sufficient and who are not easily or secretly oppressed" (II, p. 1267), certain editions assert: "aristocratic countries are full of rich and influential individuals who do *not* know how to be self-sufficient and who are not easily or secretly oppressed" (my emphasis).

In chapter IV of the second part of the second volume (p. 306), the author maintains that in 1831 the proposal of the partisans of the tariff circulated in a few days "due to the power of the printed word," while several editions attribute this fact to "the birth of the printed word." The editions in use contain more than a hundred errors of this type.

17. The reader will find in the notes the reasons that led to certain of these corrections. For instance, the deletion of the allusion to John Quincy Adams (note k for p. 53).

The editors of the new edition of the complete works of Tocqueville, published by Gallimard, preferred to produce the last edition corrected by Tocqueville, the thirteenth, which dates from 1850. That edition nonetheless presents a good number of the errors present in previous editions. It also introduced a certain number of new errors.

18. The writing of the fragments that I cite is not always, as you will see, at the level of the published texts. The sometimes maladroit, sometimes frankly incorrect sentences that are reproduced have clearly not received the attention accorded to the published texts. You will find in particular certain stylistic and grammatical archaisms, as well as certain errors in the use of tenses, moods, and prepositions that I have not tried to modify in any way.

iants and versions present in the manuscript; the selection was made for obvious reasons of interest as well as placement. I have deliberately chosen to concentrate the greatest portion of the additions in the chapters that seem to me to have the most interest, and in particular in the second volume of the book. The additions to the main text appear between brackets; they may be preceded and followed by various diacritical signs whose meaning is set forth below.[19]

The notes consist of marginalia, of variants or versions predating the final version, which belong to the drafts, travel notes, fragments of correspondence, and criticisms put forth by friends and family. Their sources have been carefully and systematically indicated. To these notes is added the critical apparatus that I wanted to be useful as well as succinct.

Finally, at the end of the fourth volume, I have included in the form of appendixes six texts of different types.[20] The first two, *Journey to Lake*

19. The new fragments that this edition presents are reproduced as they can be read in the manuscript. I have nonetheless made a certain number of corrections and modifications necessary for comprehension:

1. Punctuation and capitalizations have been added in almost all of the new fragments.

2. Spelling errors, particularly those of foreign proper names, such as *Massachusetts* or *Pennsylvania,* written indifferently in a correct or incorrect way, have always been corrected. When the error is systematic, I have included the correct word in brackets.

3. In many cases, the manuscript includes several variants of the same fragment, the same sentence, or the same word. I have chosen to present the version that seemed to me the most appropriate. I have not always presented all the versions that exist in the manuscript if they seemed to have nothing more than a philological interest. Sometimes the gender or the number of the verb in the original agrees with only one of the variants; in this case, I have reestablished the correct form of the verb.

4. I have completed some of the abbreviations used by Tocqueville in the manuscript.

5. All of the italics are Tocqueville's, with the exception of citations in the criticisms by Tocqueville's family and friends, and, sometimes, of titles of books. On this point I have made modifications due to usage.

20. The thirteenth edition included for the first time as an appendix the report of Tocqueville to the *Académie des sciences morales et politiques* on the book by Cherbuliez, *De la démocratie en Suisse,* and Tocqueville's speech of 27 January 1848 to the Chamber, in which he foresaw the February revolution. Tocqueville's intention had been as well

Oneida and *A Fortnight in the Wilderness,* had been written by Tocqueville during his journey in the United States. Everything suggests that they would have constituted appendices to the *Democracy* if Beaumont had not written *Marie.* We know in fact from the latter that Tocqueville had judged the two narratives to be too close to his travel companion's fictional venture to consider publishing them.[21]

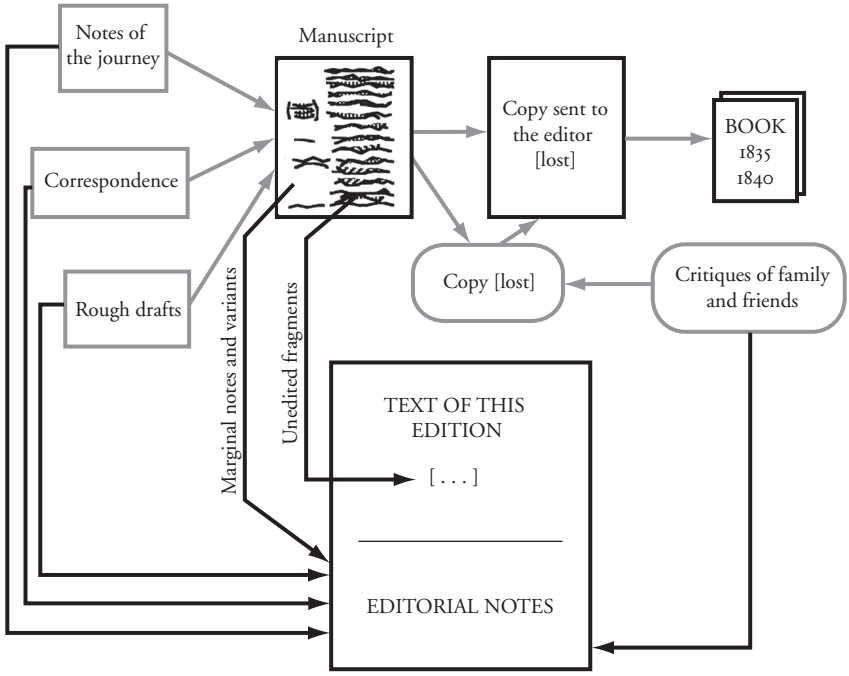
The two texts that follow are part of the drafts. Without the polish and the quality of the two preceding ones, they still have a certain documentary interest.

To include a certain number of ideas that will constitute the keystones of Tocqueville's political thought, I have added an unpublished letter from the author, dating from 1830 and addressed to Charles Stoffels.

Finally, I believed it was good to recapitulate in appendixes the foreword to the twelfth edition and all of the works cited by Tocqueville in his book as well as in the drafts, in order to aid in the reconstruction of the "Tocqueville library."

to include as an appendix a short work written in October 1847 and published with the title "De la classe moyenne et du people" ["Of the middle class and the people"] (*OC,* III, 2, p. 738–741), which he sent to Pagnerre (letter from Tocqueville to Pagnerre of 13 September 1850, at the National Assembly). Because of length, the present edition does not reproduce the two appendixes of the 1850 edition.

21. See *OCB,* V, p. 27.


Notes of the journey
Manuscript
Correspondence
Rough drafts
Copy sent to the editor [lost]
BOOK 1835 1840
Copy [lost]
Critiques of family and friends
Marginal notes and variants
Unedited fragments
TEXT OF THIS EDITION
[. . .]
EDITORIAL NOTES

Abbreviations and Symbols Used in This Edition

[. . .]	Text not crossed out in the manuscript.
<. . .>	Text circled or surrounded in pen (this generally concerns fragments that Tocqueville wanted to delete, but the presence of a circle around a word sometimes served solely to draw the author's attention: Is the use pertinent? Does the word conflict phonetically with the one following?).
≠. . .≠	Word or text crossed out by one or several vertical or diagonal lines.
{. . .}	Word or text crossed out horizontally.
/	Sign placed at the end of the sentence to indicate that a horizontal line separates it in the manuscript from the one that follows.
.-.-.-.-	Illegible for physical reasons. Generally due to the very poor condition of the original.
[*]	Note of Tocqueville, present in the manuscript but absent from the published version.
*	Note of Tocqueville, omitted in certain editions.
[. . . (ed.)]	Information given by the editor.
a, b, c, . . .	Notes of the editor.
(A), (B), . . .	Notes of Tocqueville that refer to the end of the volume.
1, 2, 3, . . .	Notes of Tocqueville placed at the bottom of the page.
OC	Edition of complete works published by Gallimard under the direction of J. P. Mayer at first, and François Furet and Jean-Claude Casanova afterward.

Œuvres complètes. Paris: Gallimard, 1951–:

t. I: *De la démocratie en Amérique.* 2 vols. (1951)
t. II: *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution.* 2 vols. (1952, 1953)
t. III: *Écrits et discours politiques.*
vol. 1. (1962)
vol. 2 . (1985)
vol. 2 . (1990)
t. IV: *Écrits sur le système pénitentiaire en France et à l'étranger.*
2 vols. (1985)
t. V: *Voyages.*
vol. 1: *En Sicile et aux États-Unis.* (1957)
vol. 2: *En Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie.* (1958)

t. VI: *Correspondances anglaises.*
vol. 1: *Avec Henry Reeve et John Stuart Mill.* (1954) [cité comme *Correspondance anglaise.*]
vol. 2: *Correspondance et conversations d'Alexis de Tocqueville et Nassau William Senior.* (1991)
vol. 3: *Correspondance anglaise.* (2003)
t. VII: *Correspondance étrangère d'Alexis de Tocqueville.* 1 vol. (1986)
t. VIII: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et de Gustave de Beaumont.* 3 vols. (1967)
t. IX: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et d'Arthur de Gobineau.* 1 vol. (1959)
t. X: *Correspondance et écrits locaux.* (1995)
t. XI: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et de Pierre-Paul Royer-Collard. Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et de Jean-Jacques Ampère.* 1 vol. (1970)
t. XII: *Souvenirs.* 1 vol. (1964)
t. XIII: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et de Louis de Kergorlay.* 2 vols. (1977)
t. XIV: *Correspondance familiale.* (1998)
t. XV: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et de Francisque de Corcelle. Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville et de Madame Swetchine.* 2 vols. (1983)
t. XVI: *Mélanges.* (1989)
t. XVII: *Correspondance à divers.* Not yet published.
t. XVIII: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville avec Adolphe de Circourt et Madame de Circourt.* 1 vol. (1984)

OCB Edition of complete works directed by Gustave de Beaumont.

Œuvres complètes publiées par Madame de Tocqueville. Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1864–1878:
t. I–III: *De la démocratie en Amérique.*
t. IV: *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution.*
t. V: *Correspondance et œuvres posthumes.*
t. VI: *Correspondance d'Alexis de Tocqueville.*
t. VII: *Nouvelle correspondance.*
t. VIII: *Mélanges, fragments historiques et notes sur l'Ancien Régime et la Révolution.*
t. IX: *Études économiques, politiques et littéraires.*

manuscript In the notes of the editor, the working manuscript of the *Democracy in America* (YTC, CVIa, four boxes).

v: variant

YTC — Yale Tocqueville Collection. Collection of manuscripts of Yale University, belonging to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Sterling Library owns several supplementary manuscripts.

YTC, BIIb — In this classification: lists of questions meant for American interlocutors.

YTC, CIIc — In this classification: "Sources manuscrites," alphabetic list, drawn up by Tocqueville, of travel notes.

YTC, CVa–CVk — In this classification: drafts of *Democracy.*

- CVa "Bundle no. 8" "Notes that very probably have no place to be used" (59 pp.)
- CVb "Bundle no. 13" "Various documents on the system of administration in America from which a note can be done for the chapter titled Of Government and Administration in the United States;" (34 pp.)
- CVc "Bundle no. 6" "That equality of conditions is an accomplished, irresistible fact, that breaks all those who will want to struggle against it. Consequence of this fact" (9 pp.)
- CVd "Bundle no. 5" "Ideas and fragments that all relate more or less to the great chapter titled: how the ideas and sentiments that equality suggests influence the political constitution" (53 pp.)
- CVe "Bundle no. 17" (two copies of 13 and 17 pp.)
- CVf "Bundle no. 4" "Notes, detached ideas, fragments, criticisms, relative to my two last volumes of the Democracy" (52 pp.)
- CVg "Bundle no. 9" "Drafts of the chapters of the second part of the Democracy" (partial copy in Bonnel's hand, three notebooks numbering a total of 416 pp. and two boxes with the original manuscript). This is the so-called "Rubish."
- CVh "Bundle no. 3, 1–5" "Notes, documents, ideas relative to America. Good to consult if I again want to write something on this subject" (five notebooks, 484 pp.)
- CVj "Bundle no. 2, 1–2" ". . . detached . . . on the philosophic method of the Americans, general ideas, the sources of belief . . . to be put in the . . . and that cannot be placed in the chapter" (two notebooks, 138 pp.)
- CVk "Bundle no. 7, 1–2" "Fragments, ideas that I cannot place in the work (March 1840) (insignificant collection)" (two notebooks, 148 pp.)

Note on the Manuscripts

In addition to the documents of Yale University, the editor quotes or reproduces, with the kind permission of the libraries mentioned, the following documents:

— Letter of Hervé de Tocqueville, 15 January 1827, Bibliothèque de Versailles.

— List of questions on the situation of Blacks in the United States, library of Haverford College, Pennsylvania (E. W. Smith, no. 955).

— Letter to Edward Everett, 6 February 1833 (Tocqueville, Alexis de. Letter to Edward Everett, 6 February 1833. Edward Everett papers); letter to Edward Everett, 15 February 1850 (Tocqueville, Alexis de. Letter to Edward Everett, 15 February 1850. Edward Everett papers); passages drawn from the journal of Theodore Sedgwick (Sedgwick, Theodore III. Paris journal, volume 3, November 1833–July 1834, pages 80–81, 85. Sedgwick family papers), Massachusetts Historical Society.

— Review project (General Manuscripts, Miscellaneous, TI–TO); letter to Basil Hall, 19 June 1836 (General Manuscripts [MISC] Collection, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections), library of Princeton University.

— Documents relating to the question of the indemnities (Dreer Collection), Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

— Letter to Sainte-Beuve, [8 April 1835]; letter of Sainte-Beuve to Beaumont, 26 November 1865, bibliothèque de l'Institut, Spoelberch de Lovenjoul collection.

— Letter to Richard M. Milnes, 29 May 1844; letter to Richard M. Milnes, 14 April 1845; and letter to Richard M. Milnes, 9 February 1852, Trinity College, Cambridge (Houghton papers, 25/200, 201 and 209).

— Letter to the prefect, 3 December 1851 (Ms. 1070), bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris.

— Letter to Charles Monnard, 15 October 1856, library of the *canton* and university of Lausanne.

Acknowledgments

I very much want to extend my deep thanks to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University, which continually put at my disposal the innumerable manuscripts that I was able to consult. My thanks go to the entire staff, and very particularly to two curators, Marjorie G. Wynne and Vincent Giroud. I also thank the Beinecke Library for its kind permission to quote and to reproduce the manuscripts and documents of the Tocqueville collection.

Editor's Introduction

"Man obeys first causes of which he is unaware, secondary causes that he cannot foresee, a thousand caprices of his fellows; in the end, he puts himself in chains and binds himself forever to the fragile work of his hands."

—Alexis de Tocqueville

"I have spoken and dreamed a great deal about what I have seen; I believe that if I had the leisure after my return, I would be able to write something passable on the United States. To embrace the whole in its entirety would be foolishness. I am incapable of aiming at a universal exactitude; I have not seen enough for that; but I already know, I think, much more than we have ever been taught in France about it, and certain points of the picture can be of great, even current interest."[22]

Published in two parts, in 1835 and 1840 successively, republished more than one hundred and fifty times and translated into fifteen languages, *Democracy in America* has elicited an enormous interest since its appearance. Elevated to the status of a classic of political philosophy and, as such, probably the last great text of that discipline, Tocqueville's work continues to attract readers, researchers, thinkers, and politicians, thanks to a modernity that few works of the nineteenth century can claim.

Regarding *Democracy,* the question of its *topicality* is often discussed. This is entirely appropriate if by it we mean that this exceptional work still continues to be understood and studied.

22. Letter to Édouard de Tocqueville, Washington, 20 January 1832. This letter belongs to the Yale University collection of manuscripts (Yale Tocqueville Collection—hereafter cited as YTC—classification BIa2). The reader will find in the Foreword a complete list of the abbreviations and symbols used in this edition.

With the perspicacity that was characteristic of him, Tocqueville envisaged the reception of his book in this way: "Some will find that at bottom I do not like democracy and that I am harsh toward it; others will think that I imprudently favor its development. I would be happier if the book were not read, and perhaps that happiness will come."[23]

Readers have not failed to multiply, but they have indeed divided as the author forecast. It could not have been otherwise since this contradictory interpretation coincides precisely with Tocqueville's thinking and its development.

I

Legacies

Alexis de Tocqueville belonged to an old Norman family, Clérel, which took the patronymic *de Tocqueville* in 1661.[24] In the following centuries, the family, Clérel de Tocqueville, left their land from time to time to serve the church or the crown, imitating in this their ancestor, Guillaume Clarel, who had participated in the battle of Hastings.

The Revolution surprised a family firmly established on the Cotentin peninsula, on good terms with its vassals, and honoring its seigniorial duties. When the revolutionary tide reached Normandy, it carried away only

23. In a letter of the correspondence with Kergorlay [1835] (*OC,* XIII, 1, p. 374), but probably addressed to someone else.

24. The village of Tocqueville and the château are about fifteen kilometers from Cherbourg. On the origins of the Tocqueville family see G.-A. Simon, *Les Clarel à l'époque de la conquête d'Angleterre et leur descendance dans la famille Clérel de Tocqueville* (Caen: Société d'Impression de Basse Normandie, 1936); and *Histoire généalogique des Clérel, seigneurs de Rampan, Tocqueville, Clouay, Lignerolles, . . .* (Caen: Imprimerie Ozanne et Cie., 1954).

My intention here is to present the principal features of Tocqueville's biography during the years that preceded the *Democracy.* For more details, refer to R.-Pierre Marcel, *Essai politique sur Alexis de Tocqueville* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1910); Antoine Rédier, *Comme disait Monsieur de Tocqueville* (Paris: Perrin, 1925); J.-P. Mayer, *Prophet of the Mass Age: A Study of Alexis de Tocqueville* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1939); André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville* (Paris: Hachette, 1984); Hugh Brogan, *Alexis de Tocqueville: A Life* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2007).

the dovecote of the château. It took from the Tocqueville family just the privilege of raising pigeons.

Hervé de Tocqueville welcomed the revolution with a certain sympathy. After a short stay in Brussels, disgust for the life of the *émigré*—the notes of his son on the depravity of a powerless aristocracy are the direct echo of the opinions of the father—led him to return to Paris, where he enlisted in the national guard. On 10 August 1792, Hervé de Tocqueville was part of a section of the national guard that, coming from the *faubourg* Saint-Victor, was preparing to defend the Tuileries. Rallying to the opinion of citizens met along the way, the men who made up the section decided to march against the palace; following this sudden change of opinion Hervé surreptitiously abandoned the section.

After several months in Picardy, Hervé returned to Paris in January 1793. At the end of the month, he went to Malesherbes and, on March 12, married Louise Le Peletier de Rosanbo, granddaughter of the famous Malesherbes.

The refuge at Malesherbes protected its inhabitants until the end of autumn. The defender of Louis XVI was strongly urged to leave France, but he stubbornly remained, intending perhaps to serve as the defender of the Queen. On 17 and 19 December, two members of the revolutionary committee arrested all the inhabitants of the château. Hervé de Tocqueville, his wife, the Peletier d'Aunay family, and the young Louis de Rosanbo owed their lives only to 9 Thermidor. They would see Malesherbes, Madame de Rosanbo, Jean-Baptiste de Chateaubriand, and his wife perish.[25]

The unpublished memoirs of Hervé de Tocqueville speak, not without some melancholy, about moments spent in the company of Malesherbes and other prisoners at Port-Libre (Port-Royal).[26] The months that preceded the trial and inevitable sentence of death for Malesherbes brought forth within Hervé a boundless admiration for the noble old man who with dignity mounted the scaffold following his daughter and granddaughter.

25. Monsieur de Rosanbo was guillotined on 20 April 1794; Malesherbes, Madame de Rosanbo, Jean-Baptiste de Chateaubriand and his wife, the older daughter of the Rosanbos, were guillotined the following day.

26. On the captivity and execution of Malesherbes, Édouard de Tocqueville published one part of the memoirs of his father with the title "Episodes of the Terror," *Le contemporain, revue d'économie chrétienne,* January 1861, republished as a brochure in 1901.

Such events must have been evoked many times in the family, and Alexis always saw in his great-grandfather, Malesherbes, an exemplary figure without peer.[27] At one time he would conceive the project of writing a book on his ancestor. The idea would come to nothing, but the shadow of Malesherbes hovers over many pages of *Democracy.*[28] A bust of the President of the *Cour des Aides,* placed on the worktable of the author, would preside silently over the writing of many works.

Under the Empire, the Tocqueville family lived in Paris in the winter and at Verneuil in the summer, where Hervé[29] accepted the more or less symbolic position of mayor.[30] The education of the children was entrusted to the Abbé Lesueur, who had been Hervé's private tutor and who did not

27. When Tocqueville was looking for a position, his father wrote him a letter of recommendation in which he explained:

> My last son Alexis de Tocqueville intends to pursue a career as a magistrate. He has just completed his law degree with some success, and I beg the support of your excellency in opening this career to him. In his family there are examples that will impose on him the obligation to follow it with zeal. Grandson by his mother of President de Rosanbo and of M. de Malesherbes, if he cannot equal them in talent, he will at least try to approach them in the qualities that distinguish a good magistrate. He would be very happy to begin under your auspices.

Letter of 15 January 1827 to an unspecified recipient, with the kind permission of the Bibliothèque de Versailles.

28. Tocqueville's political career finished with a gesture worthy of President Malesherbes. Arrested with many of his colleagues at the time of the coup of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, Tocqueville in prison at Vincennes received an order to be set free. He immediately wrote to the prefect: "I have just received an order setting me free. I had not solicited it and I have authorized no one to solicit it; since it does not include all of my colleagues detained for the same reason and in the same way in the same prison, I have reason to believe that it has been addressed to me by mistake, and in any case, I cannot benefit from it, since my intention is to leave here only with my colleagues." Vincennes, 3 December 1851, with the kind permission of the Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris.

29. According to André Jardin, Hervé could have been the secret agent of the Count d'Artois during the Empire (*Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 16). This book also devotes a chapter to his career as prefect (pp. 18–39).

30. The father of Alexis seems to have fulfilled his duties with a zeal that was particular to him, but not without presenting a certain resistance to the orders of the Emperor. In 1814, for example, he organized the mass marriage of young men about to be conscripted into the army and posted decrees so high that it was impossible to read them. Antoine Rédier, *Comme disait Monsieur de Tocqueville,* p. 34.

hide his partiality for Alexis.[31] Several documents attest to the anti-liberal tendencies of Lesueur as well as to his position as an intransigent Catholic monarchist; in this he seemed in better agreement with the *ultra* sympathies of the Countess de Tocqueville than with the more conciliatory and intelligent position of her husband.[32]

The days of the future author of *Democracy* were occupied by the lessons of the Abbé, reading sessions with the family, composition exercises, and visits by relatives and friends.[33] The private tutor believed in a brilliant future for his pupil.[34] Like his brothers and his intimate

31. Hippolyte, the eldest, was born on 1 October 1797, and began a military career on 1 July 1814. He participated in the Spanish expedition with the rank of captain and left the army on 15 October 1830. Married to Émilie Evrard de Belisle, he would spend most of his time developing his property of Nacqueville, in the Contentin.

Édouard, born in 1800, entered the army in 1816, but had to leave it in 1822 for health reasons. In 1829, he married Alexandrine Ollivier, who owned a large property at Baugy, in Oise. Tocqueville would feel particular affection for their sons, René and Hubert. André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville,* pp. 46–50.

Alexis was born in 1805.

32. In a letter from Lesueur to Édouard, 13 September 1822, we read regarding secret societies:

> It is more than time to deal with them. All of Europe is infected by this accursed race. It seems impossible to destroy the germ, but vigorous means must be invented to stop their contagion. There must be a pest house in the Siberian oceans in which the leaders of the plague would be enclosed; there they would be forcibly quarantined not for days, but for years. I am persuaded that not one would return from there. They would poison each other, kill each other, consume each other (YTC, AIV).

33. The catalogue of the library of the Tocqueville château, established in 1818, includes, among other prestigious names, those of Montaigne, La Bruyère, Locke, Bacon, Fontenelle, Pope, Morelly, Montesquieu, Thomas More, Buffon, Corneille, Racine, Molière, Voltaire, Plutarch, Grotius, Hume, and Bossuet. YTC, AIe.

34. At the time of a family celebration in 1822, the Abbé Lesueur addressed to the Countess de Tocqueville the following verse regarding her son:

> As wise as a Demosthenes
> is the youngest of your sons
> going to appear in the arena:
> to testify to his victory,
> the name of the great Alexis
> will be inscribed in the history [of the college].

friend, Louis de Kergorlay,[35] the young Alexis considered a military career.

We perhaps owe the abandonment of Alexis's military plans to the Abbé Lesueur's insistence: "My dear Édouard," wrote the Abbé in 1822, "you must counsel him against becoming a military man. You know the drawbacks better than we, and I am sure that he will rely more on his brothers than on his father. That character, Louis de Kergorlay, put this idea in his head. They are going to meet again, and indeed my plan is to ask M. *Loulou* to leave us alone and to mind his own business."[36]

A distant cousin, from a quite similar family background, Kergorlay had established the bonds of a profound friendship with Tocqueville. They expressed it in an abundant correspondence that deals as much with Tocque-

Let us postpone our homage,
it is the wisest course,
and to regain our spirits,
let us wait until next year.
Next year, the Monarchy,
its foundations reestablished,
will see the liberals flee;
and our King on his throne,
finally master of his kingdom,
will want to cure all our ills.
Tune: When the oxen go two by two, the plowing goes better . . . (Letter from Lesueur to Édouard de Tocqueville, 25 August 1822, YTC, AIV).

35. During the weeks that followed the July Revolution, Tocqueville would momentarily regret not having followed his initial impulse, that of entering a military career: "I regret more than ever not having followed the initial ideas of my youth and not entering the army"—he confessed to his friend Charles Stoffels on 26 August 1830.

> Those in the army are also humiliated, but they have a thousand occasions before them to rise up again, and we do not. The thought of striking a saber blow for France, if foreigners wanted to invade her territory for a third time, is the only one that rouses me amid the disgust that surrounds me. Love of independence of our country, of its external grandeur, is the only sentiment that still makes something in my soul vibrate (YTC, AVII).

36. Letter from the Abbé Lesueur to Édouard de Tocqueville, 14 September 1822, YTC, AIV. The same idea is found in a letter dated 16 September: "How sad it would be to smother under a helmet a talent that promises so many distinctions."

ville's works as with books, parliamentary opinions, and the matrimonial plans of Kergorlay; it also includes many commentaries and recommendations of the latter on the writings of his friend.[37] Kergorlay's mark on the pages of *Democracy* is clear and easy enough to spot.

With the Restoration, Hervé began a roving career as a prefect, beginning in 1814 in Maine-et-Loire. Hervé afterward fulfilled the same functions in Oise and in Dijon (1816). In 1817, he accepted the prefecture of Metz, where he remained until 1823. He then moved to Amiens, and in 1826 was finally back in Versailles. His nomination as a peer of France on 4 November 1827 forced him, for reasons of incompatibility of duties, to leave his position in January 1828. The July Revolution would eliminate the peerage and remove him forever from political life.[38]

The Countess Louise de Tocqueville, who seemed never to have been able to recover from her months of detention, followed her husband in his different posts until 1817, the moment that she settled definitively in Paris. The family correspondence shows her prostrate, requiring the constant attention of those around her. Alexis lived with her until 1820.

In April of that year, while his two brothers began their military careers, Alexis rejoined his father in Moselle to complete his studies at the royal college of Metz, which he finished in 1823.[39] He then returned to Paris to begin his studies in law.[40]

37. This correspondence is published in the two tomes of volume XIII of the *Œuvres complètes.*

38. In 1829, Hervé de Tocqueville had published a brochure on the proposed municipal law, entitled *De la charte provinciale.* On this point, the ideas of the son would not be those of the father, but they would partially echo them. In 1847, Hervé de Tocqueville published *Histoire philosophique du règne de Louis XV,* in two volumes, and in 1850, *Coup d'œil sur le règne de Louis XVI.* These two works continue to have a certain interest.

39. Two of his school compositions are preserved: "De Laudibus Demosthenes" and "L'importance de l'éloquence chez l'homme." A "Discours sur le progrès des Arts dans la Grèce" had a certain effect. In 1822, Hervé presented his son with an edition of Horace (*Qvinti Horatii Flacci Opera.* Londini Aeneis Tabulis incidit Iohannes Pine MDCCXXXIII [MDCCXXXVII], 2 vols.) with this dedication: "Given to my son, Alexis, on 5 September 1822, the day when he obtained the prize of honor in Rhetoric, the first prize in Latin translation, the second prize in French composition, and four certificates of merit. Metz, 5 September 1822. The Count de Tocqueville." *Bernard Quav-*

At the end of 1826, his law studies finished, Tocqueville started on a journey to Italy and Sicily in the company of his brother, Édouard. His nomination as *juge auditeur* at Versailles, on 5 April 1827, precipitated his return to Paris.

The Machine at Law

Tocqueville spent the first months at the prefecture of his father. Following the latter's resignation, he then shared an apartment with a new friend, Gustave de Beaumont.[41]

The family Bonnin de La Bonninière originated in Touraine. It had spread into the neighboring provinces and had recently acquired the patronymic *de Beaumont.* At the beginning of the century the Count Jules de Beaumont, his wife, and their four children lived at the château de La Borde, at Beaumont-la-Chartre, in Sarthe. Jules de Beaumont was the mayor there during the Empire. It was in this setting, little different from that of Verneuil, that Gustave had spent his childhood.

The Tocquevilles devoted afternoons to reading and conversation, including among their visitors Chateaubriand, who profited particularly from his visits to work on his *Moïse.* At the home of the Beaumonts, the family read together and devoted itself to music, painting, and charitable works.[42]

itch, catalogue 1069, December 1986. I owe this information to the kindness of Marjorie G. Wynne, librarian of Yale University.

40. He would gain his diploma after the presentation of two theses: "De usurpationibus aut de usucapionibus" and "L'Action en rescision ou nullité." André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 70.

41. George W. Pierson indicated the importance of the influence of Beaumont in *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938), and even earlier in "Gustave de Beaumont: Liberal," *Franco-American Review* 1 (1936–1937): 307–16. More recently, Seymour Drescher has insisted on the significance of Beaumont's texts for understanding Tocqueville in an interesting appendix to *Tocqueville and Beaumont on Social Reform* (New York: Harper, 1968), pp. 201–17, "Tocqueville and Beaumont: A Rationale for Collective Study." See also Christine Dunn Henderson, "Beaumont y Tocqueville," in Eduardo Nolla, ed., *Alexis de Tocqueville. Libertad, igualdad, despotismo* (Madrid: Gota a Gota, 2007), pp. 73–99.

42. Rose Préau de la Baraudière had been called "La Providence" by the inhabitants of Beaumont-la-Charte. On her tomb is written: "She was, while alive, the mother of the poor."

Even if the Beaumont family belonged to the minor provincial nobility and could not include among its ancestors a Lamoignon de Malesherbes, the family had, like the Tocqueville family, distinguished itself in arms and was related to the Lafayette family.

In February 1826, Gustave de Beaumont was named *substitut du procureur du roi* at Versailles. Tocqueville struck up a friendship with him when he assumed his responsibility as *juge auditeur,*[43] in June 1827.

The future author of *Democracy* chose a legal career with some hesitation. He was afraid of turning into a "machine at law."[44] His first weeks of work as a magistrate showed him the deficiencies of his legal preparation and revealed a certain trouble speaking in public that he would regret all his life. He would attribute a large part of his failure in politics to this difficulty.

Gustave de Beaumont placed him under his protection. It was the beginning of a friendship that, Tocqueville would say, "was born *already old."*[45] Heine from his perspective would compare the two friends to oil and vinegar.[46] The first letter that still exists of their correspondence goes back to the month of October 1828. It is devoted to a long reflection on *A*

43. A position without salary and with vaguely defined duties.

44. To Kergorlay, 23 July 1827, *OC,* XIII, 1, p. 108.

45. In a note from Tocqueville to Beaumont criticizing his oratorical style (YTC, CIVa).

46. "It must be said in fairness about M. de Tocqueville, who reported, that he upheld his convictions with energy; he is a man of the mind, who has little fervor and who, beneath the frozen surface, follows the arguments of his logic; consequently his speeches have a certain frigid brilliance, like sculpted ice. But what M. de Tocqueville lacks in feeling, his friend, M. de Beaumont, possesses in superabundance; and these two inseparable companions, whom we see together everywhere, in their travels, in their publications, in the Chamber of Deputies, complement each other in the best possible way. The one, the severe thinker, and the other, the man with smooth feelings, go together like a bottle of vinegar and a bottle of oil." Heinrich Heine, *Allemands et Français* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1881), pp. 313–14.

Another contemporary noted: "Gustave de Beaumont was as lively as he was amiable; he had solid qualities of the heart and a vivacity of spirit that gave rise to a great deal of grace and gaiety. Tocqueville, in contrast, was cold, reserved, master of himself to the point of calculating his actions as well as his relationships." Louis Passy, *Le marquis de Blosseville, souvenirs* (Évreux: Charles Hérissey, 1898), p. 107.

In the following pages, but above all in the pages of the *Democracy,* we will gain a better idea of Beaumont's decisive role in the work of his friend.

History of England From the First Invasion by the Romans to the Commencement of the Reign of William the Third, by John Lingard, which Tocqueville shared with his "dear future collaborator."[47] The two friends shared readings and together attended Guizot's course on the history of civilization in Europe.[48]

In September 1829, Beaumont was named *substitut* for the department of Seine. The distance that separated him from his friend did not interrupt their friendship. Beaumont came to Versailles as soon as his work allowed. Tocqueville now shared his apartment with Ernest de Chabrol, who took Beaumont's place at the court of *première instance* at Versailles.

The July Revolution broke out soon after. It was going to change considerably the life of the two young magistrates.

The July Days

Although they belonged to a milieu largely hostile to the French Revolution, Tocqueville and Beaumont were not contemporaneous with the event. As such, their ideas, without being completely opposite to those of their relatives, were inevitably different. They witnessed the July Revolution with more disillusionment and sadness than hatred.

In a letter to Henry Reeve,[49] Tocqueville admitted:

> Some absolutely want to make me a party man and I am not; I am given passions and I have only opinions, or rather I have only one passion, the love of liberty and human dignity. In my view, all governmental forms are

47. Letter of 5 October 1828, *Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 71. A year later, Tocqueville wrote to his friend: "We are now intimately bound, bound for life, I think" (*ibid.,* p. 89); and a little later:

> Some good works on history can still emerge from our common efforts. It goes without saying that we must develop the *homme politique* in us. And for that it is the history of men and, above all, the history of those who have most immediately preceded us in the world that we must study (Letter of 25 October 1829, *ibid.,* p. 93).

48. We have the notes of Tocqueville for the lectures given between 11 April 1829 and 29 May 1830, which deal with Charlemagne and feudal society. Tocqueville also knew the contents of the other lectures.

49. Letter to Reeve, 22 March 1837, *OC,* VI, 1, pp. 37–38.

only more or less perfect means to satisfy that holy and legitimate passion of men. I am given alternately democratic or aristocratic prejudices; I would perhaps have had one or the other, if I had been born in another century and in another country. But the chance of my birth has made it very easy for me to defend myself from both. I came into the world at the end of a long Revolution that, after destroying the old state, had created nothing lasting. The aristocracy was already dead when I was born, and democracy did not yet exist; so my instinct could not carry me blindly toward either the one or the other. I lived in a country that for forty years had tried a bit of everything without settling definitively on anything, so I wasn't easily influenced regarding political illusions. As part of the old aristocracy of my country myself, I had neither hatred nor natural jealousy against the aristocracy, and since this aristocracy was destroyed, I did not have any natural love for it either, for we are strongly attached only to what is alive. I was close enough to it to know it well, far enough away to judge it without passion. I will say as much about the democratic element. No family memory, no personal interest gave me a natural and necessary inclination toward democracy. But as for me, I had received no injury from it; I had no particular reason to love it or to hate it, apart from those provided by my reason. In a word, I was in such good equilibrium between the past and the future that I felt naturally and instinctively drawn to neither the one nor the other, and it did not take great efforts for me to look calmly at both sides.[50]

50. Beaumont expressed himself in nearly identical terms:

When I was born, a social order that was fifteen centuries old finally collapsed. [. . .] Never had such a great ruin appeared before the eyes of peoples. [. . .] Never had such a great reconstruction incited the genius of men. A new world arose on the debris of the old one; spirits were restless, passions ardent, minds in labor; all of Europe changed, [. . .] opinions, mores, laws, were swept along in a whirlpool so rapid that new institutions could scarcely be distinguished from those that no longer existed. [. . .] The origin of sovereignty had been displaced; the principles of government were changed; a new art of war had been invented, new sciences created; men were no less extraordinary than events; the greatest nations of the world took children as leaders, while old men were expelled from public affairs [. . .] soldiers without ex-

If Tocqueville exaggerated the coldness and disinterestedness with which he observed the two opposing options, he was sincere in the idea that history could just as easily have made him an *ultra* as a liberal.

Beaumont found himself in a quite similar situation. In Paris on 30 July 1830, he wrote in his memoirs: "All the men wore a tri-colored ribbon in their button hole, or a cockade on their hat. I did not have one; no one said anything to me. But when someone approached me yelling 'Long live the Charter' in a demanding tone, I gave the same cry, and it didn't cost my conscience anything to do so."[51]

perience triumphed over the most battle hardened groups; generals who had just come out of school overthrew powerful empires [. . .] the rule of peoples was solemnly proclaimed; and never were such strong and such glorious individuals seen. Everyone rushed into an arena that fortune seemed to open to all (*Marie, ou esclavage aux États-Unis* (Paris: Charles Gosselin, 1835), I, pp. 39–40).

51. Beaumont's unpublished memoirs on the July Revolution (YTC, AV). Beaumont summarized his thinking about the revolution as follows:

> The middle class made the revolution that the people executed; but the republican party, a party recruited from all classes, led it and determined its results. I will explain:
>
> The industrialists, tradesmen, heads of companies, small proprietors, etc., irritated by the Ministry and by the government of the king, knew that they did not want that government, but did not know what they wanted in its place. They cried *Vive la Charte* because the Charter was violated. They wanted what the government did not want.
>
> They said to the workers: "You will not work, which is to say, you will not live if this illegal state of things continues."
>
> They said nothing more. That was indeed to say: overthrow it; and since force alone could destroy it, that was also to say: even use force. But it was not in the mores of peaceful tradesmen and tranquil industrialists to march at the head of the workers in order to lead their assaults.
>
> Then came the men who for ten years had established a new government for when the government ended. The society, *aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera,* whose power burst forth in the newspapers, in the elections, in attacks against public officials, appeared stronger and bolder than ever. Composed in the majority of enlightened, enterprising men who were inflexible in their principles and ready to sacrifice their lives for the sanctity of their cause, they provided the leaders for the populace whose courage they regularized; and when these leaders had led the populace to victory, they were its masters; they were the masters of force from the beginning. This is how a monarchical republic emerged from the triumph of a multitude set into motion by a class whose impulse was toward the constitutional monarchy.

The following day, Tocqueville returned to the town hall of Versailles the musket and ammunition that he had received the day before as a member of the national guard and declared to Ernest de Blosseville: "There is nothing more to be done; everything is finished. At the gate of Saint-Cloud, I have just seen the convoy of the monarchy pass by, the King, the children of France, the ministers are in carriages surrounded by body guards. And well! Would you believe, the escutcheons of the royal carriages are hidden beneath mud coverings."[52]

From the time of the appointment of the Polignac government on 8 August 1829,[53] Tocqueville and Beaumont expected an event of this type. A partisan of the Bourbons, Tocqueville owed a certain loyalty to his social origins, but the accomplished deed of the change of dynasty led him in fact to discover a great fidelity to France.[54] It was far from the intention of Tocqueville and Beaumont to qualify themselves as liberals in 1830. Nonetheless, the fact of putting the honor of France as well as the principles of the Charter and of liberty before the Bourbons put them closer to liberal positions than they (and Tocqueville in particular) believed.

This loyalty to the nation rather than to the Bourbons nevertheless isolated them from their milieu. Friends and relatives withdrew from public life as the possibility of overturning the monarchy seemed more unreal, in particular after the month of August, when all officials were asked to swear an oath of loyalty to Louis-Philippe. At that moment Hippolyte de Tocqueville and Louis de Kergorlay left the army, and Hervé lost his title of peer of France.[55]

52. Louis Passy, *Le marquis de Blosseville,* p. 130.

53. This is Beaumont's opinion in his unpublished memoirs. Tocqueville wrote the same to his brother, Édouard. André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville,* pp. 83–84.

54. Tocqueville would describe his feelings in this way: "Tied to the Royalists by the sharing of a few principles and by a thousand family bonds, I see myself in some way bound to a party whose conduct seems to me often not very honorable and almost always extravagant. I cannot help suffering immensely from their faults, all the while condemning them with all my power." Letter to Ernest de Chabrol, 18 October 1831, YTC, BIa2.

55. Hervé seemed to fear that the new government, suspecting his loyalty to the Bourbons, had his mail opened. During his journey in America, Tocqueville asked his sister-in-law, Alexandrine, to assure his father that his letters arrived punctually and sealed. Letter to Madame Édouard de Tocqueville, 18 October 1831, YTC, BIa2.

For their part, Tocqueville and Beaumont were confronted with a difficult choice: swear an oath to the new king or abandon their judicial careers. Tocqueville swore an oath, and justified his decision by the fear of anarchy:

> I swore an oath to the new government. I believed that by acting in this way I have fulfilled the strict duty of a Frenchman. In our current state, if Louis-Philippe were overthrown, it would certainly not be to the profit of Henry V, but of the republic and of anarchy. Those who love their country must therefore rally openly to the new power that is arising, since it alone can now save France from itself. I despise the new king; I believe his right to the throne less than doubtful, and yet I will support him more firmly, I think, than those who smoothed the way for him and who will not take long to be his masters or his enemies.[56]

When Henrion, a friend of aristocratic origin, criticized Tocqueville's decision, the latter responded in words that leave no doubt about his position:

> The morning of the ordinances I declared before the assembled tribunal that henceforth resistance seemed legitimate to me and that I would resist in my narrow sphere. When the movement went so far as to overthrow the dynasty, I hid from no one my opposition to this measure. I said that I would wage civil war if it took place. Once it was an accomplished fact, I continued to believe what I had always believed, that the strictest duty was not toward a man or a family, but toward country. The salvation of France, at the point where we were, seemed to me to be in maintaining the new king. So I promised to support him, without hiding the fact that I did not do it for him. I protested that I did not intend an oath that bound me forever to any cause other than to the interest of our country, and I

56. Letter to Charles Stoffels, 26 August 1830, YTC, AVII. Tocqueville swore the oath for the first time on 16 August 1830.

The conduct of Beaumont testifies to his desire to move beyond the quarrels of the moment. Thus, he opposed the policy of not applying the principle of amnesty to those who pillaged Paris on 27, 28, and 29 July, and he decided not to go forward with trials brought about by facts that seemed to him covered by the amnesty. He wrote a report on the question and defended it before the king on 14 September 1830. YTC, AV.

> did not hide the fact that the moment that the new dynasty became incompatible with that interest, I would conspire against it.[57]

It was out of these precise circumstances that the idea of the journey to America was born.[58] The plan and its realization did not take much time. On 31 October 1830, six days after Tocqueville took the oath a second time, following his nomination to the post of *juge suppléant,* the two magistrates presented to the government a proposal for a mission whose purpose was to study the American penal institutions.[59]

It involved describing and understanding the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems in use in the United States. The Pennsylvania system provided for incarceration in solitary confinement night and day as well as individual work by each person in his cell. The Auburn system, in the state of New York, provided for imprisonment in solitary confinement and work in common, but under the strict law of silence.

About his American plans, Tocqueville gave the following argument that he confided to his friend Stoffels:

> My position in France is bad on all points, at least as I see it; for either the government will consolidate itself, which is not very probable, or it will be destroyed.

57. Draft of a letter to Henrion, 17 October 1830, YTC, AVII.

58. See *OCB,* V, pp. 15–16. Young Tocqueville had perhaps spoken to Chateaubriand about his American projects. In a letter to Charles Stoffels of 26 August 1830 (YTC, AVII), he commented on them in this way: "If I am forced to leave my career, and if nothing necessarily keeps me in France, I have decided to flee the idleness of private life and to take up the busy existence of the traveler again for a few years. For a long time I have had the greatest desire to visit North America. I will go there to see what a great republic is. The only thing I fear is that, during that time, one will be established in France." The study of the penitentiary system is "a very honorable pretext that makes us seem particularly to merit the interest of the government, whatever it may be, and that assures us its good will upon our return." Letter of 11 October 1831 to Charles Stoffels, YTC, AVII.

59. See *Note sur le système pénitentiaire et sur la mission confiée par M. le Ministre de l'Intérieur à MM. Gustave de Beaumont et Alexis de Tocqueville* (Paris: H. Fournier, 1831).

In the first case, my situation is not very pleasant and will not be for a long while. I do not want advancement, because that would tie me to men whose intentions I suspect. So here I am, an obscure *juge suppléant,* having no way to make myself known, even in the narrow sphere in which I am enclosed; for if I become part of the opposition, as a member of the public prosecutor's office, I do not even have the honor of being removed from office; they will be content to keep me quiet by preventing me from working in court. If I support those men, I am doing something that is in accord with neither my principles nor my position. So there I am necessarily reduced to the role of a neutral, which is to say to the most pitiful role of all, especially when you occupy a lower grade. To all of that, add that the future is until now so obscure that it is impossible to say which party we should, in the interest of our country, desire to have the definitive victory.

Now, suppose that this government is overthrown; amid the disruption that will follow, I have no chance to make myself known, for I am starting too low. I still have done nothing to attract public attention. In vain would I try to do my best; this revolution would find me too young or too obscure. I would certainly warmly embrace the banner of the party that appeared to me the most just, but I would serve in its lowest ranks, which would scarcely suit me.

There is my future in France; I sketched it without exaggeration. Now, suppose that, without ceasing to be a magistrate and still maintaining my rights of seniority, I go to America; fifteen months go by; the parties become clear in France; you see clearly which one is incompatible with the grandeur and tranquility of your country; you then return with a clear and decided opinion and free of any engagement with whomsoever in the world. This journey, all by itself, has drawn you out of the most common class; the knowledge that you have acquired among so celebrated a people finally brings you out of the crowd. You know just what a vast republic is, why it is practical here, impractical there! All the points of public administration have been successively examined. Returning to France, you feel, certainly, a strength that you did not have when you left. If the moment is favorable, some publication can alert the public to your existence and fix the attention of the parties on you. If that does not happen, oh well! Your journey at least did you no harm, for you were as unknown in America as you were in France, and returning to your country you are

> entirely as suited to advance as if you had remained there. There, I think, is a plan that is not in all ways absurd.[60]

It is therefore understood that initially the book on the United States was considered a means: that of opening the doors of a political career for its author. But the publication that Tocqueville is referring to in the cited passage still lacked a name and substance. Moreover, the initial intention of Tocqueville and Beaumont was to publish a shared text on the political institutions and mores of the North Americans. So we are a long way from the birth of *Democracy in America* and *Marie, ou l'esclavage aux États-Unis.*

The reasons that Beaumont had for leaving France for a time were not very far from those of Tocqueville. In *Marie,* he gave the following romantic version that he put in the mouth of the protagonist:

> Toward the year 1831, a Frenchman resolved to go to America with the intention of settling there. This plan was inspired by various causes. A recent revolution had revived in his country political passions that were believed to be extinct. His sympathies and his convictions carried him toward one party; his family ties kept him in another. Thus placed between his principles and his feelings, he constantly felt some conflict; to follow the movements of his heart, he would have to stifle the voice of his reason; and if he remained faithful to his beliefs, he would offend his dearest affections.[61]

It could also be that Beaumont had refused to remove two compromising documents relating to the trial of the Baroness de Feuchères, and it has been suggested that the government sent him to the United States with the

60. Letter to Charles Stoffels, 4 November 1830, YTC, AVII. But, in a letter probably dating from 1835 (*OC,* XIII, 1, p. 374), Tocqueville affirmed on the contrary: "I did not go there with the idea of doing a book, but the idea of a book came to me there."

Tocqueville's letters must be used with certain precautions. The author very clearly takes into account the person who is to receive his letters. Thus, he sometimes writes to his correspondents what they expect, hiding certain information from his most intimate friends, while sharing it with acquaintances, etc.

61. Beaumont, *Marie,* I, pp. 2–3.

intention of removing him from the matter.[62] The Baroness de Feuchères was, we recall, an adventuress of English origin. She was accused of having murdered her lover, the old Prince de Condé. The person who undoubtedly profited the most from the death of the latter turned out to be Louis-Philippe himself, since his son was the direct heir of the largest portion of the wealth of the last Condé. If it is incorrect that the French government sent Beaumont to the United States for the purpose of removing him from the trial, it remains true that it was bent on including a magistrate of aristocratic origin in a trial in which the king could be implicated. By proceeding in this way, the government shielded itself from the suspicions of the legitimists and, if the judgment ever implicated the conduct of the monarch,[63] it could always turn against a lawyer who did not have the reputation of being favorable to the new regime.

America

Tocqueville and Beaumont left for America on April 2, 1831. Their baggage included dozens of letters of introduction and a few works on the United States: those of Volney and of Cooper, a history of the United States, and the book by Basil Hall. They did not need them very much. All the information that they were curious about was to be provided on site. It seemed to them that the book they planned to write upon their return had to concern America as much as democracy, and they were very impatient to know both.

During the crossing of the Atlantic, they translated one part of Basil Hall's work[64] as preparation for their research on the prisons; they learned about the history of the United States and discussed the *Cours d'économie politique* of Jean-Baptiste Say.

62. Louis André, *La mystérieuse Baronne de Feuchères* (Paris: Perrin, 1925), pp. 261–62. On the Feuchères affair, we can also consult Marjorie Bowen, *The Scandal of Sophie Dawes* (New York: Appleton, 1935); and Emile Lesueur, *Le dernier Condé* (Paris: Alcan, 1937).

63. The Beinecke Library holds, under the classification CIf, some of Beaumont's letters to his superiors on the matter of the Baroness de Feuchères.

64. A few pages of notes remain in YTC, BIf 2.9.

On the afternoon of 9 May, they reached Newport. They were in New York the next day. They would remain in the United States until 20 February 1832.[65]

Upon their arrival, Tocqueville and Beaumont discovered that the publicity that their official mission had received in the American press opened every door to them.[66] So the official study of the penitentiary system and the unofficial research on that new form of government called democracy seemed to look very promising.

Concerning democracy, the greatest difficulty was found not in America, but in France.

Once first impressions had passed, the two friends realized that their eagerness to know and understand American society required above all a real knowledge of French society, which they lacked. The purpose of their journey became more precise. It would concern a double and simultaneous intellectual journey whose subject would be France as well as America. "I will admit to you that what most prevents me from knowing what is happening on this point in America," wrote Tocqueville to his friend Blosseville, "is being almost completely ignorant of what exists in France."[67] This observation is found many times in his correspondence.

It then became imperative to contact colleagues, friends, and relatives in order to obtain the information necessary for understanding America by way of understanding France.

On this point, Tocqueville began by asking his father, Chabrol, and Blosseville for information about the French administration:

65. This is not the place to reconstitute the American itinerary in detail. Moreover, it is impossible in this matter to improve on what George W. Pierson said in *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938). I use the mention of this work to express my deep acknowledgment to Mr. Pierson for the time that he devoted to my questions and for the encouragement that he constantly lavished on me during my work.

66. "It is true that the newspapers, which deal with everything, have announced our arrival and expressed the hope that we will find active assistance everywhere. The result is that all doors are open to us and that everywhere we receive the most flattering welcome." Letter from Tocqueville to his mother, 29 April–19 May 1831, YTC, BIa2.

67. Letter of 30 October 1831, YTC, BIa2.

> You must [. . .] provide another [service] to Beaumont and to me—he wrote to Ernest de Chabrol—which is, perhaps you're going to laugh, to instruct us as fully as possible on what people think at home about this country. Since we left France, we have lived with Americans, either on the ship that carried us, or since our arrival here; as a result, we have become accustomed by degree, and without abrupt transitions, to the new order of things in the midst of which we live. We have already largely lost our national prejudices about this people. And yet you sense how necessary it is for us to know the opinions that prevail at home if we want to modify them and even if we desire to study particularly here what can be useful for enlightening minds.

About twenty questions followed concerning French ideas on American political institutions, on the national character, on the different classes of society, on the commercial situation, the future of the country, its position in religious matters, etc.

> To what cause do you attribute the prosperity of this nation? Is it political institutions or material and industrial causes? [. . .] Do you think there are political parties in the United States? How far do you think the spirit of equality is pushed here? Is it in the mores or in the laws? What form do you think it takes?[68]

In order not to influence the responses of his informants, Tocqueville decided not to share with them his impressions about America except by chance. The first letter to his family contained a long description of the journey and of the arrival in America, but reflections about American society had to wait until the letter to Édouard dated 28 May:

> We are very truly in another world here; political passions are only at the surface; the profound passion, the only one that deeply moves the human heart, the passion of every day, is the acquisition of wealth, and there are a thousand ways to acquire it without disturbing the State. You would have to be blind, in my opinion, to want to compare this country to Europe

68. Letter to Ernest de Chabrol, 18 May 1831, YTC, BIa2. Tocqueville asked him to give the same questions to Élie de Beaumont. He also asked that the lectures of Guizot on Roman society and the Middle Ages be sent to him.

> and to adopt in one what works in another; I believed it before leaving France; I believe it more and more examining the society in the midst of which I now live; they are a people of merchants who occupy themselves with public affairs when their work leaves spare time. I hope that on our return to Europe, we will be able to say something good on this subject; perhaps no one is better placed to study a people than we are.[69]

A letter to Ernest de Chabrol, a few days after that one, returned to the same idea:

> Imagine, my dear friend, if you can, a society composed of all the nations of the world: English, French, Germans . . . , everyone having a language, a belief, opinions that are different; in a word, a society without common prejudices, sentiments, ideas, without a national character, a hundred times happier than ours. More virtuous? I doubt it. There is the point of departure. What serves as a bond for such diverse elements, what makes all of that a people? Interest. There is the secret. Particular interest that pokes through at every instant, interest that, moreover, arises openly and calls itself a social theory.[70]

Only the exceptional physical conditions of the United States seemed to justify the survival of the republic and allow the free exercise of interest: "America finds itself, for the present, in such a favorable physical situation that particular interest is never contrary to general interest, which is certainly not the case in Europe."[71]

69. YTC, BIa2. The passage refers to Chateaubriand. In 1825, Tocqueville had written a few pages criticizing an article of Chateaubriand that had appeared in the *Journal des débats* of 24 October, and in which the latter recommended to the French the model of the American democracy. "The only task worthy of genius would have been to show us the difference that exists between American society and us," wrote Tocqueville, "and not to abuse us with a false likeness." Quoted by Antoine Rédier, *Comme disait Monsieur de Tocqueville,* p. 93.

70. Letter of 9 June 1831, YTC, BIa2. Tocqueville copied this passage into his alphabetic notebook A. This letter contains several key ideas of the book. Chabrol is also the recipient of a letter dated 26 November 1831 that contains very precise information about the American judicial system. YTC, BIa2.

71. Tocqueville added in the same letter: "This people seems to be a company of merchants, gathered for business; and the further you dig into the national character of the Americans, the more you see that they have sought the value of everything only in

At the beginning, as we see, Tocqueville was above all recalling Bodin and Montesquieu.[72] We must wait until the end of the journey to see climatic theories given a less important place. The final versions of the manuscript of *Democracy* still emphasize the decisive importance of the physical setting on American democracy, however.[73]

Tocqueville also thought that it was the exceptional physical conditions of the United States that allowed the Americans to get along without public power.[74] If a public career was closed to ambition, a thousand others were open to the Americans. In America "the entire world seems [. . .] a malleable material that man turns and shapes as he wills."[75]

The element that thwarted the harmful effects of the unlimited desire for money soon appeared clearly; it was religion. At the end of June Tocqueville wrote to his family: "Never have I felt so much the influence of religion on the mores and the social and political state of a people than since I have been in America, and it is impossible here to ignore the necessity of this force for motivating and regulating human actions."[76]

Before the multitude of sects and doctrines, the author had no doubt about the one that was suitable for democracy:

> I have always believed, you know, that constitutional monarchies would arrive at the republic; and I am persuaded as well that Protestantism will necessarily end up at natural religion. What I am saying to you is felt very deeply by many religious souls here; they are revolted at the sight of this consequence of their doctrines, and the reaction throws them into Ca-

the answer to this single question: how much money will it make?" Letter of 9 June 1831 to Ernest de Chabrol, YTC, BIa2.

72. See the letter to Ernest de Chabrol of 26 July 1831, YTC, BIa2; James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America"* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), pp. 45, 52–53; and George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* p. 126.

73. See, for example, p. lxix.

74. "Here, there is no public power and, truly speaking, there is no need for it." Letter of 9 June 1831 to Ernest de Chabrol, YTC, BIa2. In another letter to Chabrol on 16 June 1831, Tocqueville wrote: "As for the *government,* we are still looking for it. It doesn't really exist" (YTC, BIa2).

75. Letter of 9 June 1831 to Ernest de Chabrol, YTC, BIa2.

76. Letter to Édouard, 20 June 1831, YTC, BIa2.

tholicism, whose principle is very questionable, but where, at least, everything is linked together.[77]

Exceptional physical conditions, private interest, religion, in that it puts a brake on the inordinate taste for material wealth—these are, from the first weeks of the American journey, the three elements that profoundly marked Tocqueville's arguments.

In the months that followed, natural conditions would no longer cover physical circumstances strictly speaking, but would also include the point of departure and the origin of the United States; interest would take various forms: individualism, monotony, love of material enjoyments, manufacturing aristocracy, industrialization of art and of life; religion would also be called patriotism, honor, and general ideas. But, added to a certain theory of history, the three initial elements—physical conditions, interest and religion—would continue to form the framework of the entire system of *Democracy.*

The journey led Tocqueville and Beaumont from New York to Albany and Buffalo; it let them briefly see the great wilderness beyond Detroit, at Pontiac and Saginaw; it took them to the Great Lakes and to Canada in order to bring them back afterward to New England and New York. From there, the travelers went to the west and the south. They saw Philadelphia and Baltimore; they passed through Philadelphia again in order to see next Cincinnati, Louisville, Nashville, Memphis, and New Orleans.[78] They returned to the north by Montgomery, Norfolk, Washington, and finally New York.

All of this allowed scarcely any leisure. As Tocqueville wrote to Louis de Kergorlay: "What categorizes a traveler are his questions, his research, and

77. Letter to Ernest de Chabrol, 26 October 1831, YTC, BIa2. This letter contains a long reflection on religions in the United States.

78. Their knowledge of the south of the Union was consequently very limited. Tocqueville recognized this in a letter to Édouard: "I am leaving America after using my time there wisely and pleasantly. I have only a superficial idea about the *South* of the Union, but in order to know it as well as the north it would be necessary to have remained there six months. In general, two years are necessary to develop a complete and exact picture of the United States. I hope, however, that I have not wasted my time." Letter of 20 January 1832, YTC, BIa2.

not the degree of facility with which he expresses himself in the national language."[79] The two magistrates, transformed into indefatigable questioners, interrogated, took notes, read and observed.[80] Tocqueville made rough notebooks in which he noted the result of his research. Beaumont did the same and carefully recorded each of their interviews.[81]

Tocqueville's notes are not truly a travel diary, nor do they constitute the only material out of which his theory is going to emerge.[82] Reading them provides little information about his principal ideas. If you are unaware of the theoretical presuppositions of the author, the notes are sometimes uninteresting, even insignificant. The fragments of conversations, various remarks, and interviews only make some sense on the condition that they be considered not as the beginning of reflections on the United States but as stages in an intellectual process predating the American journey.

It is not by chance, or by some peculiar mental skill, that the whole book is already found in the first impressions about America.[83] Even if he wrote the opposite to some of his correspondents,[84] Tocqueville was in America as much to observe the facts that would allow him to write *Democracy* as

79. Letter to Kergorlay, 4 July 1837, *OC,* XIII, p. 460.

80. Six lists of questions exist: 1. List of forty-two questions on criminal justice. 2. List of seven questions on education. 3. Six questions on political questions. 4. Twelve questions on town rights. 5. Three questions on roads. 6. Other questions on town problems. YTC, BIIb.

81. We have the travel notes of Tocqueville, but nearly all of Beaumont's notes are lost. The few rare notes that remain show observations that are more wide-ranging and more detailed, but less theoretical in nature than those of Tocqueville. They would have been of great interest for the reconstruction of the intellectual journey of the two friends.

82. The notes of the journey to America have been published in *Voyages en Sicile et aux Etats-Unis, OC,* V, 1.

83. For example, in a letter of 29 June 1831 to Louis de Kergorlay, *OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 225–36.

84. If I ever do something [blank] about America, it will be in France, and with the documents that I am bringing back, that I will try to undertake it. I will leave America able to understand the documents that I have not been able to study yet: that is the clearest result of the journey. Moreover, on this country, I have only notes without order or coherence: detached ideas that only I have the key to, isolated facts that

to give body and substance to a certain idea of *Democracy* that he already had in mind before the American journey.[85]

The theory began to take shape by bits and pieces in the letters sent to France. "Keep this letter, I beg of you," wrote Tocqueville to his mother, "it contains details that I do not have the time to note and that I will find again later with pleasure."[86] This request was found in all of his travel correspondence.

remind me about a host of others. What I am bringing back of most interest are two small notebooks in which I have written word for word the conversations that I had with the most notable men of this country. This sum of paper has an inestimable value for me, but only for me who can sense the value of the questions and answers. The only, somewhat general ideas that I have expressed about America until now are found in some letters addressed to my family and to a few people in France. Even then, these were written hastily, on steamboats, or in some hole where I had to use my knees as a table. Will I ever publish anything about this country? In truth, I do not know. It seems to me that I have some good ideas; but I still do not know yet in what framework to put them, and public attention frightens me (letter of Tocqueville to his mother, 24 October 1831, YTC, BIa2).

Compare the passage quoted with this fragment from a letter to Édouard of 20 June of the same year:

> In France no one doubts what America is, and we find ourselves in an excellent position to give an account of it. We come here after very serious study that has made our minds aware of or put them on the track of many ideas. We come here together so that there is a constant clash of minds. [. . .] No matter what happens, we lack neither ardor nor courage, and if some obstacle does not stop us, I hope that we will finish by bringing forth the work we have thought about for a year (YTC, BIa2).

85. In a letter published in the correspondence with Kergorlay, but perhaps addressed to Eugène Stoffels, as André Jardin has pointed out, Tocqueville confessed: "For nearly ten years, I have been thinking about part of what I explained to you just now. I was in America only to enlighten myself on this point. The penitentiary system was a pretext; I took it as a passport that would enable me to penetrate everywhere in the United States." *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 374.

Also see the letter to Charles Stoffels, 21 April 1830, reproduced in Appendix V of the second volume, which already advances the theory of history that is present in *Democracy.*

86. Letter of 26 April–19 May 1831, YTC, BIa2. The remark is found again in the letters addressed to his friends. Thus, in the letter to Kergorlay of 29 June 1831 ("Keep this letter. It will be interesting for me later."), *OC,* XIII, 1, p. 236; or in that of 16 July 1831, to Ernest de Chabrol ("Do not forget to keep my letters."), YTC, BIa2.

We must not forget, however, that Tocqueville did not travel alone. If, in the end, the two friends each offered to the public his own version of democracy, it is no less true that until their return to France the notion of a great work on democracy in America was elaborated in concert, in the "duel of minds" that Tocqueville mentioned several times. It is difficult in these conditions to decide on the paternity of an idea, or the origin of a citation. The final result would forever obliterate the daily debates of the two travelers.

As has sometimes been said, Beaumont had more than the effect of a catalyst on Tocqueville. He drew Tocqueville's attention to many phenomena in American society. He collaborated with energy on the writing and revision of *Democracy.* Finally he produced an admirable social novel meant to accompany the work of his friend. Beaumont's notes could have given an idea of the intellectual debate with Tocqueville. In their absence, Beaumont's criticisms of the manuscript of *Democracy,* the drafts of his own books, and the reading of his publications bring clearly to light an intelligence that was only slightly inferior to that of Tocqueville.

It is difficult to pinpoint the moment when the book project ceased to be shared. The first news from America sent by Beaumont spoke of "our great work."[87] In a letter to his mother dated 7 October, he mentioned for the first time "my plans," and the expression was found again in the correspondence that follows.[88] Between May and October, Beaumont discovered, then got to know more closely the American Indians, and as George W. Pierson noted, perhaps this is what explains the abrupt change in his plans.[89]

If family correspondence spoke with enthusiasm about the brilliant future that their works on America were to bring to the travelers, the letters addressed to colleagues remained nonetheless quite vague:

87. Gustave de Beaumont, *Lettres d'Amérique,* pp. 28, 45, 48, 66, and 92.

88. *Ibid.,* p. 159; "my work," in a letter of 26 October; and "the great work that is going to immortalize me," in a letter of 8 November.

89. In a letter of 1 August 1831, to his father and in another of 2 August, addressed to Ernest de Chabrol, Beaumont already announced his interest in the fate of the Indians. *Ibid.,* pp. 105 and 110.

> You speak to me about what could be written about America, noted Tocqueville to an unknown recipient, and I do not know at all if I will ever have the occasion to publish the least thing on this subject; the general tableau of English America is an immense work absolutely beyond my strength, and from another perspective, if I abandon the idea of the whole, I no longer know to which details to pay particular attention. So I have limited myself until now to gathering a host of diverse documents and partial observations. I enjoy this work, and it interests me deeply; but will it ever be useful to me for anything? I assure you that the further I go, the more I doubt it.
>
> But, as you say, there would be piquant new insights to present about this country. Except for about ten people in Paris who, like you, are not absorbed by the politics of the day, America is as unknown as Japan; or rather, people talk about it as Montesquieu did about Japan. The Americans *argumenti causa* are made to say and do a host of things, in honor of true principles, that the poor fellows are very innocent of, I swear.[90]

Tocqueville was obviously not interested in disclosing to his superiors that what most interested him in America was not the project officially announced, but writing about the American republic. Only Le Peletier d'Aunay seemed to have been let in on the secret: "I expected a good work from you," wrote d'Aunay to Tocqueville in August 1831, "and this field of your observations makes me certain of it. You will show us this America much more exactly than all the other travelers, beginning with Liancourt and Volney. Nothing will escape, I am sure, from the observation of your solid intelligence. On your return, give the government the report promised. But save, for your reputation, your glory, the full journey to that country."[91]

Beaumont and Tocqueville in America had different interests, but their intention was to publish their books simultaneously, as two parts of the same work. In 1831, and for some time after, their books constituted the two sides of the same coin. They would become distinct only later. The

90. In a draft of a letter written in Philadelphia, November 1831 (YTC, BIa2). He also hid his plans from Ernest de Chabrol (letter of 24 January 1832, YTC, BIa2).

91. Letter of Le Peletier d'Aunay, 16 August 1831, YTC, BId.

first edition of *Système pénitentiaire* still announced a joint work on America by Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville, with the title *Institutions et mœurs américaines.* A month after the publication of *Système pénitentiaire,* a letter from Tocqueville to Edward Everett still suggested a collaborative work: "We are now busy, M. de Beaumont and I, composing a more general work on America."[92]

On 20 February 1832, Tocqueville and Beaumont left New York to return to France.

Tocqueville hardly considered any longer taking up the duties that he had at Versailles. He entertained other plans that he revealed in confidence to Ernest de Chabrol: "I do not know if I must withdraw entirely," he confessed, "as I am often tempted to do, or try to advance; what I see clearly at least is that I will not put on the robe of *juge suppléant* again. I will no longer be seen at Versailles, or I will be seen with another title. This point is decided (but between us)."[93]

The Penitentiary System

After returning to France at the end of March, Beaumont rejoined his family in Sarthe, while Tocqueville remained in Paris.

Beaumont began to write the report on the penitentiary system and met Tocqueville in Paris in mid-April in order to ensure his collaboration. Weeks passed. As Beaumont moved ahead preparing the report on the prisons, Tocqueville was plunged into a great despondency from which he did not want to emerge for work on any intellectual endeavor.[94] He seemed incapable of adapting to the idleness that followed the year of feverish agitation spent in North America. He accepted visiting the prison of Toulon,

92. Letter to Edward Everett, 6 February 1833, with the kind permission of the Massachusetts Historical Society (Tocqueville, Alexis de. Letter to Edward Everett, 6 February 1833. Edward Everett papers).

93. To Ernest de Chabrol, 24 January 1832, YTC, BIa2.

94. Letter of 4 April 1832 to Beaumont, *OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 111–12.

then those of Geneva and Lausanne in May and June, but the largest part of the work of writing the report fell to Beaumont.[95]

Before these journeys, Tocqueville came to the aid of his friend, Louis de Kergorlay, implicated in the adventure of the Duchess de Berry. On 9 March, for the first and last time, Tocqueville exercised his profession as a lawyer. He defended Kergorlay who, acquitted, was soon set free.[96]

The defense of one of the prisoners of the *Carlo Alberto* must not suggest that Tocqueville had changed his position about the subversive efforts to overthrow the July Monarchy. If he preferred the Bourbons, if his friendship for Kergorlay was unshakable, he remained clearly opposed to the violent expulsion of the reigning monarch. The American letters already revealed the fear of a precipitous return to Europe in case of the overthrow of the monarchy[97] and the fear of seeing the "hothead,"[98] Hippolyte, involved in such an overthrow.

As for his opinion about the *ultras,* it can be clarified by a letter in which, sensing that his older brother was tempted to take some radical decision against the July Monarchy, Tocqueville expressed himself in these terms:

> Amid the chaos in which we find ourselves, I seem to see one incontestable fact. For forty years we have made immense progress in the practical understanding of the idea of liberty. Peoples, like individuals, need to become educated before they know how to act. I cannot doubt that our people advance. There are riots in the large cities, but the mass of the

95. You know what Beaumont's publications are; but there is a detail that perhaps you do not know. The first work that we published together, M. de Beaumont and I, on the American prisons, had as the sole writer, M. de Beaumont. I only provided my observations and a few notes. Although our two names were attached to that book which was, I can say more easily now, a true success, I have never hidden from my friends that M. de Beaumont was so to speak the sole author (letter of 26 June 1841, supporting Beaumont's candidacy to the Académie des sciences morales et politiques, very probably addressed to Mignet, YTC, DIIa).

96. His plea appears in *OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 321–27.

97. The idea of an exile in the United States also crossed their minds. See note j of p. 1302 of the second volume.

98. In his letter to Édouard, on 20 June 1831, Tocqueville exhorted his brother to have the utmost patience (YTC, BIa2). Also see the letter to Kergorlay of 21 June 1831, *OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 235–36.

population calmly obeys the laws; and yet the government is useless. Do you think as much would have happened forty years ago? We are harvesting the fruit of the fifteen years of liberty that we enjoyed under the Restoration. Aren't you struck to see the extreme left protest that it wants to proceed only by legal measures and, at the same time, to hear the royalists declare that they must appeal to public opinion, that public opinion alone can give strength to the throne, that it must be won over before anything else? Amid all the miseries of the present time and the fit of high fever that gave us the July Revolution, don't you find reasons to hope that we will finally reach a settled social state? I do not know if we are made to be free, but what is certain is that we are infinitely more capable of being so than forty years ago. If the Restoration had lasted ten years longer, I believe we would have been saved; the habit of legality and constitutional forms would have entirely gotten into our mores. But now, could things be put back in their place; could a second Restoration take place? I see many obstacles. The greatest of all without question is found in the personnel of the royalist party that would triumph. Never will you make the most active portion of the royalist party understand that there are concessions without which they cannot hope to govern, that to be lasting the legitimist monarchy must be national, must ally itself with the ideas of liberty or be broken by them. If the Bourbons ever regain the throne, they will make use of force, and they will fall again. Perhaps in France we have what is needed to create a government that is strong because of military glory, but not a government that is strong solely because of right. Right can indeed help to maintain a government if it is skillful, but not to protect it from its own failings.

In any case, it seems to me that the behavior of the royalists is well conceived. I am pleased to see them stand on the ground of legality, to see them work to win the majority and not to make the minority triumph by force. That fact augurs well. If they had always acted like this, they would have spared themselves and France great misfortunes. Moreover, by adopting in this way what is reasonable in the ideas of liberty, they assume in everyone's eyes a tacit commitment to respect those ideas, if they are ever the masters. Many among them become convinced by their own words, without expecting to. They acquire the habit of associating, of appealing to public opinion, all the free and constitutional habits that they never had. This spectacle reassures me a bit about the future. I hope that after

> so many conflicts we will succeed in saving ourselves from anarchy and despotism.[99]

The pages of a plan for a review[100] that Tocqueville and Beaumont at one time intended to establish with the participation of Blosseville, Chabrol, Montalembert, and a few others put clearly in view the political convictions of the future editors:

> They [the editors of the review] do not feel prejudices in favor of the government created by the July Revolution; they do not want to destroy it. They place themselves neither against it nor within it, but next to it, and they want to try to judge its acts without passion and without weakness. If the free expression of the national will brought the elder branch of the Bourbons back to the throne, if a restoration could take place while assuring the nation of the rights that are its due, the editors of the review would see the event with pleasure; they would consider it as a favorable measure of future social progress. But they want a restoration only on those conditions; and if it must take place in a totally other way and lead to opposite results, they would regard it as a duty to oppose it.[101]

The plan was soon abandoned, probably at the end of the summer of 1833.

99. Letter to Hippolyte, 4 December 1831, YTC, BIa2. In contrast, in a rough copy of a letter of August 1831, probably addressed to Dalmassy, Tocqueville noted: "Something tells me that we will not escape from civil war." YTC, BIa2.

100. See the correspondence exchanged on this subject by Tocqueville and Beaumont in *OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 119–30.

101. With the kind permission of the Library of Princeton University (General Manuscripts [MISC] Collection, Manuscripts Division. Department of Rare Books and Special Collections), reproduced in *OC,* III, 2, pp. 35–39. The same idea is found again in a letter to Mary Mottley:

> As I had foreseen and you announced a few days ago, civil war has begun in the west. The royalists will perhaps have some temporary successes, but I predict to you again that they will be crushed. How much loyal and honorable blood is going to flow! I have already read in the newspaper the name of a brave young man that I knew. He has just been miserably killed. So explain to me why in all times honor and incompetence seem to go hand in hand. Who were more brave, more loyal, and at the same time, more clumsy and more unfortunate than your Jacobites? Our French royalists are following their track exactly (3 June 1832, YTC, CIb).

When he was not yet finished with his report and not thinking only about the creation of a review, Beaumont was again faced with the shadowy affair of the Baroness de Feuchères. This time it concerned a trial for defamation by the baroness against the Rohan family, descendants of the Prince de Condé. Beaumont refused to take charge of it and explained that he knew nothing about the question, that he was working on his report, that the eighteen-month leave that had been granted to him had not yet ended.[102] The response was not long in coming. On 16 May 1832, he was removed from his duties.

Little satisfied by a profession that weighed on him, uncertain of his qualities for exercising it, Tocqueville found in the dismissal of Beaumont the pretext for honorably abandoning the legal career. As soon as he learned the news in Toulon, he presented his resignation.[103]

Once the work of drafting the report on the penitentiary system was finished, Tocqueville reviewed the text written by Beaumont, collaborated actively on the introduction, and wrote part of the notes. The two magistrates submitted their report on 10 October. *Du système pénitentiaire aux États-Unis et de son application en France* appeared in January 1833.

The First *Democracy*

The work on the penitentiary system was generally well received. Reviews noted with satisfaction the full account of the question and the impartial presentation of the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems in use in the United States. If the authors seemed to lean toward the system used in Pennsylvania, they did not seem to forget either the high cost of the construction of a penitentiary of this type or the danger of keeping the prisoners isolated in their cell night and day. In August, the Académie des sciences morales et politiques awarded the Montyon prize to *Système pénitentiaire.*

Tocqueville and Beaumont had planned to complete their American journey with a visit to England. They thought that England would offer

102. In a letter of 18 April 1832, YTC, CIf.
103. On 21 May 1832, YTC, CIc.

an image of the Americans before their departure for the United States as well as that of a society midway between aristocratic France and democratic America. They also thought that England was at the dawn of a revolution that would lead to democracy. The cholera epidemic that broke out at the end of 1831 had precipitated their return to France. Once the prison report was published, Tocqueville went to England from August 3 to September 7, 1833.[104]

"By going to England, I wanted [. . .] to flee for a time from the insipid spectacle that our country presents at this moment. I wanted to go to relieve my boredom a bit among our neighbors. And besides! Some claim that they are definitely going to begin a revolution and that one must hurry to see them as they are. So I hastened to go to England as to the final performance of a beautiful play."[105]

A few days spent on the other side of the Channel enlightened Tocqueville about his error. England was not on the eve of a revolution. Unlike the French aristocracy, the English aristocracy was open; it continued to exercise ancestral duties and the inferior classes of society could attain aristocracy by money.[106]

"The English aristocracy," wrote Tocqueville in his notes, "belongs very much by its passions and its prejudices to all the aristocracies of the world, but it is not based on birth, something inaccessible, but on the money that everyone can acquire; and this single difference allows it to resist, when all the others succumb either to peoples or to kings."[107]

A week after his arrival in London, he wrote to Beaumont: "In short, I do not recognize in anything here our America."[108] If, following these observations, England did not serve strictly speaking as a reference point for the American and French situations, it was no less one of the keys for understanding America. It is evoked throughout *Democracy.*

104. The notes of the journey to England in 1833 are published in *Voyages en Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie, OC,* V, 2, pp. 11–43.

105. Letter to the Countess de Pisieux, 5 July 1833, YTC, CIf.

106. *OC,* V, 2, p. 36.

107. *OC,* V, 2, pp. 29–30.

108. Letter to Beaumont, 13 August 1833, *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 124.

Upon his return to Paris, Tocqueville began writing his book.[109] To do this, he settled into the attic of his parents' house, on rue de Verneuil. Beaumont, for his part, made a short journey to the Midi where his book began to take the double form of a novel and a social commentary.

In a later letter to his wife, Tocqueville would evoke the first months spent writing his book as follows:

> When I wrote *Democracy in America,* I had none of the advantages [notably a librarian at his disposal], but I had the youth, ardor, faith in a cause, and hope that allowed me to do without the kindness of librarians and the favor of archivists. Cuvier created in a garret the admirable works that earned him a beautiful house in which he set up a beautiful special room intended for the study of each of the subjects that interested him. It was a whole series of apartments each of which was as if impregnated with the particular idea that the author wanted to treat. From the moment when he was so admirably aided in his work, he did hardly anything considerable; and perhaps he sometimes came to regret the garret. But he would have found it old and cold. Those who want to return to the garret in which they passed the years of an intense and fruitful youth cannot do so. My own garret was a small room on the rue de Verneuil, where I worked in deep obscurity on the work that would bring me out of that obscurity. You are part of that memory, like all of those memories in my life that deserve to be remembered. The day was occupied by my work. Nearly every evening was spent near you.[110]

Provided with his notes on the United States, publications brought back from America, an ample correspondence with Americans and Frenchmen, his own letters, and a list of the subjects of his notes,[111] Tocqueville drew up the initial plan of his book.

109. James T. Schleifer has reconstructed in detail the writing of the most important chapters of *Democracy* in *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America."*

110. Letter of Tocqueville to his wife, with the only citation as "Sunday morning," YTC, CIb.

111. *"Sources manuscrites.* Subjects that can be of some interest to treat." YTC, CIIc. The list includes more or less the same questions as the first plan of the book.

The first outline included three categories: "Political society (relations between the federal and particular governments and the citizen of the Union and citizen of each state), civil society (relations of the citizens with each other), religious society (relations between God and the members of society, and of the religious sects with each other)."[112]

Tocqueville continued by specifying what should be found under each division:

> Political society.
>
> In political society there are two principles to which all the others are connected; the first, *sovereignty of the people,* democracy, whose principle divides and dissolves; the second, *federation,* whose principle unites and preserves.

He then noted, in two columns, the ideas that correspond to each principle:

> Sovereignty of the people.
>
> Democracy, no counter-balance. Tyranny of the majority—no aristocracy; difficulty of an aristocracy in America. Gentlemen farmers.
>
> Government of the majority; public opinion; stubbornness of the majority once formed—formation and working of parties.
>
> Public offices (administrative officials particularly enforce the laws between the State and individuals—judicial officials more especially the laws between individuals; the first belong to political society, the second to civil society). Public offices are small matters.—Why? *Municipal administration—Presidency of the United States—Army—Finances.*

> Elections—binding mandates.
>
> Town meetings.
>
> Convention.
>
> Freedom of the press—ways and effects.
>
> Public instruction.
>
> Laws—Their mobile character.
>
> Militia (perhaps should be carried to the other side).
>
> Obedience to laws. Oath

112. YTC, CVh, 1, p. 23.

(Everything that precedes is nothing more than the means that the majority uses to express and to maintain itself, and those that are put to use by the minority to attack or to defend itself.)"

Under the word federation, we read the following:

Federation.

Causes for the weakness of all federal governments—especially for the United States—future of the Union—diverse interests—multiplication—Centralization—distinguish between that of the federal government and that of the states themselves—almost non-existent—the lack of centralization already felt—however less dangerous than it will become. Causes that will make it more dangerous.

Federal tax—tariff.
Canals.
Roads.
Banks of the United States.
Land sales.
Indians.
Maritime commerce, free trade.
Patents.

Show how the various Presidents since Jefferson have successively stripped the federal government of its attributions—concessions to democracy—that is to say, to the principle on the opposite side.[113]

The section with the theme society included in turn:

Civil society.

Entry. The appointment of magistrates is the work of the political powers, but since their duties are principally for the purpose of regulating the relations and the rights of citizens with each other, they belong to civil society.

Jurisdiction.
Common law.

113. YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 23–25.

Civil laws:	Slavery, equality—Negroes
	Civil state—inheritances—paternal power.
Criminal laws:	Duel—gambling—drunkenness—
	fornication—etc.
	Jury—public prosecutor's office—lawyers.
Commercial laws:	Bankruptcy.
	Interest on money.
Mores:	American character.
	Association—commerce—industry.
	To make money.
	Washington—costume of the Lyceums.[114]

Finally, religious society:

Religious society.

Nomenclature of the various sects—From Catholicism to the sect that is farthest removed from it.

Quakers, Methodists—Point out what is antisocial in the doctrines of the Quakers, Unitarians.

Relations of the sects with each other.

Freedom of religion—Toleration: from the legal aspect; from the aspect of mores.

Catholicism.

Place of religion in the political order and its degree of influence on American society.[115]

Certain ideas outlined in this first sketch would not be found again in the definitive version. The canals, roads, gambling, etc. were so many elements that would be abandoned in the process of writing.[116] Others would

114. YTC, CVh, 1, p. 26.

115. YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 26–27.

116. At the head of the bundle of drafts that bears the number 3 (copied in notebook CVh, 1) appears the following note:

Diverse and important notes. The (illegible word) must be found here. Two or three new chapters to put I do not know where.

1. Of the great men of America and in particular of Washington.
2. Of American patriotism.

be joined to the second part, such as the army, paternal power, Catholicism, the desire to make money.

The fundamental idea of the entire book, the keystone on which Tocqueville's whole theory rests, the idea for understanding the struggle between aristocracy and democracy, between a principle that divides and a principle that unites, was already evident.

Once the general lines of the work were drawn, Tocqueville attacked the work of writing in the strict sense. For this, he followed a singular system that he described in this way to Duvergier de Hauranne:

> I think what is best for me to do is to follow the method that I have already followed for writing the book that just appeared [*Old Regime*], and even for the *Democracy.* I am going to tell you about it, although it is disagreeable to talk for so long about oneself, because, knowing it, you will perhaps be able to give me some good advice. When I have whatever subject to treat, it is quasi-impossible for me to read any books that have been written on the same matter; contact with the ideas of others agitates and disturbs me to the point of making the reading of these works painful. So I refrain, as much as I can, from knowing how their authors have interpreted the facts that occupy me, the judgment that they have made of them, the diverse ideas that these facts have suggested to them (which, parenthetically, exposes me sometimes to repeating, without knowing it, what has already been said). It requires of me, on the contrary, an unbelievable effort to find the facts by myself in the documents of the time; often in this way I obtain, with immense labor, what I would have easily found by following another path. Once this harvest is gathered so laboriously, I withdraw into myself, as if into a very closed space; in a general review, I examine with an extreme attention all the notions that I have acquired by myself; I compare them, I link them, and then I make it a rule to explicate the ideas that came spontaneously to me from this long work without any consid-

3. Of the non-physical bonds of society in America.

4. Of public officials.

5. Of the different ways to understand the republican regime.

6. That the absolute goodness of laws {must not always be judged} by the respect that they are given by those who vote for them.

7. (Illegible word) on the influence of manufacturing on democratic liberty (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 1).

> eration whatsoever for the consequences that these men or those men can draw from them. It is not that I am not extremely sensitive about the opinion of different readers; but experience has taught me that, as soon as I wanted to write with a preconceived viewpoint, to uphold a thesis, I absolutely lost all true talent, and that I was not able to do anything of value, if I did not limit myself to wanting to make clear what was most real in my impressions and in my opinions.[117]

If Beaumont informed Tocqueville in a summary way about the works that appeared on the United States, the author went forward alone and scarcely consulted any books on America, with the exception perhaps of the book by Chevalier.[118]

The writing moved ahead at a good pace. In November 1833, Tocqueville thought he would finish the part devoted to the institutions of the United States (what now constitutes the first part of the first volume of this edition) before the first of January 1834, and at one moment had the idea of publishing the first volume before the second.[119]

This plan was abandoned, and Tocqueville buckled down immediately to writing the second part, which little by little increased to an extent beyond what the author had foreseen. In addition, the part devoted to the American political institutions was reviewed and corrected several more times and, before being completed, required the aid of several collaborators.

Even as he worked relentlessly on his book, Tocqueville helped Beaumont with the writing of his.[120] Their collaboration continued throughout

117. Tocqueville to Duvergier de Hauranne, 1 September 1856, *OCB,* VI, pp. 332–33.

118. It is possible that he knew about several letters by Chevalier published in the *Revue des deux mondes.* See volume II, p. 898 of this edition and *OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 176, 202–3. Moreover, Tocqueville read Basil Hall's book during the crossing. He does not seem to have consulted *Society in America* by Harriet Martineau.

119. Remember that the *Democracy* of 1835 was published in two volumes.

120. The collaboration of Tocqueville on Beaumont's novel probably dated from the first moments of its development. In the manuscript of *Marie,* concerning the plan of the novel, this note is found in Tocqueville's handwriting:

> Plan./
>
> It involves portraying a man such as he often becomes after great revolutions, whose desires are always beyond his capacities (but there must not be any ridicule, that is to say, that the one you want to portray really has a great soul, a remarkable

the whole following year, in Paris and in Sarthe. The influence of Tocqueville on the writing of *Marie* is difficult to measure. Beaumont's manuscripts bear the trace of conversations and of comments by Tocqueville, but the small number of available manuscripts does not allow us to assess the true extent of his influence.[121] Beaumont consulted his friend about certain passages of his book and even at the last moment asked for his opinion about certain fragments that were too reminiscent of Chateaubriand.[122]

spirit, but he aims higher than the humanity of his time); a man who, never content with his lot, has an exaggerated picture of human happiness in this world, and who, reaching the point of seeing his errors and discerning what dose of happiness life can really present, has become incapable of obtaining it and has become unsuited to society. He then looks hard and calmly at himself; convinced that he would not be able to attain the first goal of his desires, no longer capable of feeling the pleasure of reaching another one, he withdraws into the wilderness without passions, without despair, with the serenity of a strong soul that judges the greatness of its misfortunes and submits.

Perhaps here you would need a rapid and oratorical recapitulation of the reality of the things of this world and of the impossibility that he, who sees things as they are, but who has found them better in his imagination, finds of submitting . . .

You must not have him attempt love in Europe. He reconnects with love in America as to a plank of salvation, and still he misses it . . . (YTC, CIX, and *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 131).

121. In the margins of the manuscript of *Marie,* there are comments by Tocqueville, written in pencil. The latter particularly pointed out unfortunate similarities to Atala: "You cannot close your eyes to the fact that this has a great deal of similarity with Atala" (vol. II, p. 136 of *Marie*); "Here again you have to be careful about father Aubry. Perhaps I am wrong. Think about it" (vol. II, p. 151 of *Marie*); "Again, be careful here of Atala" (vol. II, p. 156 of *Marie*).

122. Thus this note from Beaumont meant for Tocqueville that is found in the manuscript of the novel:

Note for Tocqueville.

There are two passages that are reminiscent of Chateaubriand despite all the efforts that I have made to avoid it. They are at page 6 and 20. Here I am giving the passages of Chateaubriand so that you can see if it is possible to leave mine:

"The reverie of a traveler is a kind of fullness of heart and blankness of mind that allows you to enjoy your whole existence at peace. It is by thinking that we disturb the felicity that God gives us; the soul is peaceful, the mind is restless. (See *Voyages,* t. 6, p. 112.)

"I went from tree to tree, to the right and to the left indiscriminately, saying to myself: here no road to follow, no cities, no narrow houses, no presidents, republics,

At the beginning of the year 1834, Tocqueville hired an American living in Paris, Francis Lippitt,[123] to help him in the compilation of the documents that he brought back from the United States. At the house of the author's parents, Faubourg St. Germain, Lippitt compiled books and brochures, newspaper clippings and diverse documents.

Theodore Sedgwick, another American whom Tocqueville contacted when he still needed information about the United States, but whom he did not hire, seems to have played a more important role. His journal bears the traces of several interviews with Tocqueville that would exercise a clear influence on several points of *Democracy.*[124]

Once the writing of the principal part of the work was finished (only the last chapter of the second part was missing), Tocqueville had a copy of his manuscript made and circulated. In this way his brothers and his father, Gustave de Beaumont, and Louis de Kergorlay read the quasi-totality of the work. A few passages were read aloud at the evening gatherings of Madame Ancelot.[125]

kings." (See *Essai historique sur les Révolutions,* t. 2, p. 417, YTC, CIX and *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 145.)

123. See note a of p. 84.

124. Sedgwick met Tocqueville in the offices of the American delegation to Paris and pointed out several books that could be useful to him. His journal for the months of November and December 1833, of January and February 1834, refers several times in succession to Tocqueville (pp. 28, 29, 32, 79, 85, 98). See Sedgwick, Theodore III. Paris journal, volume 3, November 1833–July 1834, pp. 80–81, 85. Sedgwick family papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

On 20 January 1834, for example, Sedgwick indicated that Tocqueville found that "Russia and the United States [. . .] were the only powers which presented an avenir [a future]. Both are aggrandizing—the others are stationary or diminishing" (pp. 80–81).

You find on p. 85 (Friday, 24 January 1834): "Either this day or the day before went with Tocqueville over to the legation and show [*sic*] him the books there which might assist him." On p. 98 (8 February 1834): "Tocqueville called about 11 for more information about the États-Unis." With the kind permission of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Tocqueville also counted on the collaboration of two other American residents in Paris: Edward Livingston, head of the American representation in Paris, and Nathaniel Niles, secretary of the delegation.

125. See *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 141, and Madame Ancelot, *Un salon de Paris, de 1824 à 1864* (Paris: Dentu, 1866), p. 79. Did Guerry, a friend of Beaumont, read part of the manu-

When Édouard, on 15 June, wrote to his brother to share his *observations critiques,* only the revision of the second part remained to be done in order to complete the work. Tocqueville worked on the revision during the month of July, striking out a great deal and in some places retaining only one out of three pages of the initial draft. The same month, he contacted the publisher, Charles Gosselin, who committed to publishing the text in November. He planned a printing of five hundred copies.

On 14 August 1834, Tocqueville left Paris for the château de Gallerande, in Sarthe, and there joined Beaumont. The two friends spent their days hunting and making final corrections on their texts.

Once the work was finished, a title remained to be found.

In 1833 the book by Tocqueville and Beaumont had been announced with the title *American Institutions and Mores.*[126] Once Beaumont's project became differentiated from that of Tocqueville, the latter, in March 1834, announced to Senior the publication of a book on "American institutions."[127] Beaumont kept the term "American mores." In July, at the time of Tocqueville's arrangements with his publisher, the treatise on American institutions received the title "The Dominion of Democracy in the United States";[128] in a perhaps later note announcing the publication and contained in the drafts of the first part, we find "The Dominion of Democracy in America," while a first version of the same announcement mentioned "The Dominion of Democracy in the United States." In mid-October,

script? The jacket that contains the chapter on the point of departure and the one that contains the chapter on the social state bear this comment: "The copy has been sent to Guerry."

126. Tocqueville gave a very similar title to Sparks. Letter of 30 August 1833, YTC, CId.

127. *Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with Nassau William Senior* (London: H.S. King and Co., 1872), I, p. 2. In his prologue to *Marie* (p. viii), Beaumont echoes the original title of the joint work and declares: "M. de Tocqueville described the institutions; I myself tried to sketch the mores."

128. "G[osselin] asked me what the title of the work would be. I had only lightly considered it, so that I was quite embarrassed. I answered, however, that my idea was to title the book: *The Dominion of Democracy in the United States.* Since then I have thought about it, and I find the title good. It expresses well the general idea of the book and puts it in relief. What does my judge say about it?" *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 141.

with the book in proofs, the publisher wrote to the author to ask him the title of his book. That is when Tocqueville chose *Democracy in America.*[129]

In the *Courier Français* of 24 December 1834,[130] Léon Faucher announced the publication of the work and reproduced a few passages from *Democracy in America.* The text appeared with this title in January 1835.[131]

The Reception of *Democracy*

If it is true that the workers in the print shop had shown Tocqueville's book particular attention and interest, the dazzling success of the *Democracy* was no less totally surprising to its author.

Tocqueville thought that the recent political tension with the United States would not fail to increase interest in and curiosity about the American continent and could therefore create a favorable situation for the success of the *Democracy.* But readers seem to have been attracted immediately by something far beyond the simple effect of timeliness. Moreover, if the indemnity affair—indemnities that the Americans had demanded from the French since the Napoleonic period—could be profitable to Tocqueville in France, such was not the case in America, where the publication of the *Democracy* was delayed until 1838.[132]

The appearance of the *Democracy* was unanimously acclaimed. Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Guizot, and Royer-Collard never tired in their praise. Very few publications met its appearance with silence. The reviews

129. Letter of 18 October 1834, copied in CVh, 2, pp. 55–56: "We do not have the title of your work, and I forgot yesterday to ask you about it. We cannot set the pages without the title."

130. Léon Faucher, "Democracy in the United States, by M. Alexis de Tocqueville (unpublished)," *Courier français,* 358, 24 December 1834.

131. On the 23rd, 27th, or 31st of the month, depending on the sources.

132. This is the opinion of Jared Sparks in his letter of 6 June 1837 to Tocqueville (YTC, CId). Sparks had contracted with a publisher in Boston for the preface and notes of an American version of the *Democracy.* He would abandon the project when he learned of the imminent appearance of another edition.

of Salvandy[133] and Sainte-Beuve[134] alone were enough to consecrate the author.[135]

"Not one of the chapters of this book," wrote Sainte-Beuve, "fails to testify to one of the best and most assured minds, to one of those minds most appropriate for political observation, a field in which we find so few striking and solid strides since the incomparable figure of Montesquieu."[136] The name of the great *légiste* also appeared from the pen of Salvandy who, in the *Journal des débats,*[137] proposed for *Democracy* the subtitle "The Spirit of American Laws."[138]

Among the number of discordant voices, the following can be cited:

> It is with a very particular predilection that this author offers for the admiration of the peoples of Europe a republic in which are found three colors, one color who are the masters, two other colors; a country of tri-

133. Narcise-Achille de Salvandy, "Democracy in America," *Journal des débats,* 23 March and 2 May 1835.

134. Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, "Alexis de Tocqueville. De la démocratie en Amérique," *Le temps,* 7 April 1835. The first one to be astonished by the good reception of the work, Tocqueville wrote to Sainte-Beuve the next day:

> Allow me, Sir, to place even more importance on something other than on the judgment that you have made of the American democracy, that is seeing the relationship that has been established between us continue and become more frequent. I cannot keep from believing that there are many points in common between us and that a sort of intellectual and moral intimacy would not take long to prevail between you and me, if we had the occasion to know each other better (letter with the sole comment "Wednesday morning" [8 April 1835], with the kind permission of the Institut de France, Collection Spoelberch de Lovenjoul).

135. On the last day of March, Gosselin asserted to the author: "But it seems that you have created a masterpiece" (Letter to Beaumont, 1 April 1835, *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 151). The second edition was published in June, and the third at the end of the year. The fourth and fifth date from 1836. The sixth was published the following year, and the seventh in 1839.

136. *Le temps,* 7 April 1835.

137. *Journal des débats,* 23 March 1835.

138. *Le semeur* noted: "Either we are very wrong, or M. de Tocqueville greatly studied Montesquieu before studying America" (4, no. 9 [4 March 1835]: 65–68, p. 65).

The commentaries of the entire French press agreed on the point. *Le national de 1834,* on 7 June 1835, described the text as "a work whose high level will be felt by all those who meditate on the current state of society in Europe, and on the future that is in store for it."

> colored humanity in which the red men who are the natural masters find themselves being exterminated by the white men who are the usurpers; in which the Black men are sold jumbled together with animals in the public square. A touching example of equality, admirable evidence of independence that it is currently stylish to take as the model in Europe, to see as the standard for true perfectibility![139]

American readers, for their part, downplayed certain critical observations of the author about American society,[140] but would acknowledge the impartiality of the work and particularly its clear superiority over the commentaries of English travelers.

Foreign publications did not spare compliments. The English found in Tocqueville an abundance of arguments against the American republic[141] and recalled in reviews the precarious character of the experiment.[142] The *London and Paris Courier* of 14 January 1836 asserted on its part: "Much, indeed, has been written by Englishmen respecting America, and a good deal by visitants from the continent of Europe. But with the solitary exception of the *Démocratie en Amérique,* by M. de Tocqueville, nothing absolutely has been written by a foreigner which approaches to an accurate delineation of our political organization."

When, in December, the *Moniteur du commerce* mentioned "this excellent book that everyone has known and judged for a long time," the remark

139. *Gazette de France,* 3 and 13 February 1835. The passage quoted is found in the issue of 3 February.

140. For example, the review in *American Quarterly Review,* 19, March 1839, pp. 124–66.

141. See *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,* 37, no. 230 (1835): 758–66. The commentary of the *Atheneum* is particularly critical: "rational, at times, even to dullness [. . .] a dislike of its ambitious style—its reduction of everything to theory—and its over-arrogant aim at uniting the sentenciousness of Montesquieu to the florid description of the Comte de Ségur" (394, 16 May 1835, p. 375). In a letter of 6 June 1837 (YTC, CId), Jared Sparks informed Tocqueville that the English reviews that mention the passages against democracy in Tocqueville's work had been reproduced in American publications, and that, in his opinion, this fact might diminish the desire for a quick translation of *Democracy.*

142. Among the English critiques, that of John Stuart Mill stands clearly apart. Tocqueville wrote to him, "You are [. . .] the only one who has understood me entirely" (Letter of 7 December 1835, *OC,* VI, 1, p. 302). Mill's commentary had been published in the *London Review* 30, no. 2 (1835): 85–129.

did not seem exaggerated. *Democracy* was in fashion, and the Académie des sciences morales et politiques ratified the public's interest with the Montyon prize, which bestowed on the author twelve thousand francs.

For its part, the publication of *Marie, ou l'esclavage aux États-Unis*[143] brought a success in no way inferior to that of *Democracy.*[144] Between 1835 and 1842, there would be five editions of the novel by Gustave de Beaumont. It would fall afterward, and very wrongly, into oblivion. Its reception was generally warm, though measured, although the *Quarterly Review* did not hesitate to declare it "the most interesting [book] that has ever yet been published on the subject of American society and manners by a native of the European continent."[145] Francisque de Corcelle wrote the review for the *Revue des deux mondes.*[146]

The principal failing of the book was proclaimed immediately. *Marie* had the peculiarity of being a novel and a social commentary at the same time. As such, it did not succeed in satisfying either those who love theoretical works, who preferred the *Democracy* by far, or those who read novels. The author of the review in the *Journal des débats*[147] saw this correctly when he wrote:

> There are two books in [the] book. That is its failing perhaps. The large public that wants to be amused is always afraid that it is being instructed. The rare public that seeks instruction fears being interested and moved. The readers of M. de Beaumont are indeed exposed to this double danger. He teaches the most frivolous. He captures, carries away, touches the most unsentimental and the coldest. The whole of American society is brought to life in this work that is so true that I dare not call it a novel; that is so

143. *Marie, ou l'esclavage aux États-Unis, tableau des mœurs américaines.* Paris: Charles Gosselin, 1835. 2 vols.

144. Beaumont's novel appeared in Brussels in 1835. It was translated into Spanish in 1840 and republished in 1849, and translated into Portuguese in 1847. An abridged edition was published in Germany in 1836. The second French edition dates from 1835, the third from the following year, the fourth from 1840, and the fifth and last from 1842.

145. *Quarterly Review* 53, no. 106 (1835): 289.

146. Francisque de Corcelle, "De l'esclavage aux États-Unis," *Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, 6, 1836, pp. 227–46.

147. *Journal des débats,* 6 December 1835.

clothed in the richest and most intense colors of the imagination that I cannot call it a treatise."

Shortly after the publication of *Marie,* Beaumont abandoned the plan for a second part (announced in the notice).[148] Two years later, when he was writing *Irlande,* he seemed to care so little about his novel that he wrote to Tocqueville: "My book is my great and only passion, even more than yours is for you; I am not doing a second book, it is the first; and I am afraid of missing the mark, although I am full of zeal."[149]

England and the Second *Democracy*

Tocqueville had begun the writing of a book on America with the intention, no matter how unhelpful it might be, of making himself known for the purpose of a political career. His friend Blosseville had even used the opportunity of his review of the *Democracy* to assert, "Such books should open the way to the parliamentary tribune."[150]

But in March 1835, Tocqueville was not thinking so much about the career of a politician as about profiting from the extraordinary reputation that the appearance of his book had just given him. If the *Democracy* had not yet opened the doors of the Chamber of Deputies, it had earned him the friendship of a few prominent individuals who were going to play an important role in the writing of the second part of his book. They were Jean-Jacques Ampère, Royer-Collard, with whom Tocqueville was going to begin a profound and determinant intellectual relationship, and Corcelle.

Beaumont, Kergorlay, and Édouard de Tocqueville would form the principal trio of critics of the manuscript of the second part of the *Democracy.* The text would as well, here and there, bear the imprint of Ampère and Corcelle.

At the beginning of the year 1835, Tocqueville worked on the writing of

148. *Marie,* I, p. iii.
149. Letter from Beaumont to Tocqueville (15 July 1837?), *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 209.
150. *L'écho français,* 11 February 1835.

a report on pauperism[151] and planned a new journey to England. When Tocqueville and Beaumont were at the point of making important personal and professional decisions, the two friends crossed the Channel.[152]

What changes had taken place during the last two years? Was the English aristocracy capable of resisting the advance of democracy? Such were the questions that Tocqueville and Beaumont asked themselves. Their first observations concerned a strong tendency toward centralization. The point was important, and Tocqueville recognized the necessity of speaking about it in the second part of *Democracy.*[153] John Stuart Mill, Lord Minto, and Henry Reeve confirmed his impressions on this subject,[154] but it was Nassau W. Senior above all who, on the occasion of two long conversations, gave him the most detailed arguments on centralization.

> Senior tells me: The Bill for Reform of the Poor Laws is not only a bill of social economy, but is above all a political bill. Not only does it cure the plague of pauperism that torments England, but also it gives to the aristocracy the most fatal blow that it could receive. [. . .] The law has centralized the administration of the poor law; and armed with this principle, the government, to enforce the law, has appointed a certain number of commissioners or central agents who have full power in this matter in all the parishes of England. These commissioners traveled through the territory and, in order to kill the local influences that had to be centralized,

151. "Mémoire sur le paupérisme," *Mémoires de la Société académique de Cherbourg,* 1835, pp. 293–94. It is impossible to indicate the precise reason for the writing of this work, which was inspired by the work of Villeneuve-Bargemont, *Économie politique chrétienne,* and which will be mentioned again elsewhere. Tocqueville had promised a second part that he never wrote.

152. The notes and drafts of *L'Irlande* allow us to follow in a precise way the journey of Beaumont and Tocqueville to England and Ireland in 1835. Tocqueville and Beaumont left Paris on 21 April, reached Calais on the 22nd and were in London on the 24th, where they lodged at the Ship-Hotel. The next day they went to the opera to see *Anna Bolena.* They began their visits in the English capital, continuing until 24 June. From 7 July to 9 August, they visited Ireland. On the latter date, Beaumont left to visit Scotland and Tocqueville went to Southampton. On the 18th he crossed the Channel. On 23 August he was again in Cherbourg.

153. *Voyages en Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie, OC,* V, 2, p. 49. There is also a long, unpublished conversation with Sharp (YTC, CXIb.1). Beaumont's notes contain other unpublished conversations.

154. *Ibid.,* pp. 49, 52–54.

united ten or fifteen or twenty parishes into a single administrative circumscription, that they called a union. [. . .] These unions have already been established in this way in two thirds of England, and before long they will be established everywhere. [. . .] The Bill transfers, as you see, the administration of the poor law from the aristocracy to the middle classes. And then, there you are, central administrations organized over the whole kingdom, central administrations composed of citizens, set into motion, not by the local aristocracy, but indeed by the central power—and this is serious not only for granting to the central power and to the municipal administration called a union the power to govern England, but above all for organizing in the country an administrative power whose center is the government and for which the justices of the peace, prin[cipal] and essential elements of the aristocracy, are not the agents. [. . .] I note that the result of this is, above all, that the aristocracy is stripped to the profit of the *central power;* for the *guardians of the poor,* as they are constituted, are agents chosen it is true by the middle class, but essentially subordinate even in this choice and in their action to the will of the commissioners of the government.[155]

155. YTC, CX.
Tocqueville explained the success of the democratic principle in England in this way:

General idea.
Tocqueville said yesterday [the note is in Beaumont's hand]:
Two elements in English society.
The Saxon principle
and the Norman principle.
The Saxon principle—democratic.
Everything that is democratic in English society dates from this time. The organization of the parish and the county—the hundreds—the representation of communal interests . . . The Normans came, which threw a layer of absolute power over this democratic base.
Combination of these two elements in English society.
For a long time, the Norman fact prevailed, without destroying the Saxon principle, which just hid and submitted.
Today the awakening of this principle which predominates over the Norman fact and which particularly showed itself to be superior to its adversary the day the Reform Bill passed in Parliament (YTC, CX).

But the centralizing movement and the rise to power of the middle classes did not, for all that, imply revolution and the destruction of the aristocracy. As Tocqueville had already observed during his journey of 1833, England was very far from a revolution. At the time of this new journey, Mill confirmed his judgment:

> Revolution./
> [In the margin: Why no chances of violent revolution.]
> I doubt that a quick and violent revolution is happening among us. All classes are very steady and know too well how to defend themselves. They are also enlightened, used to fighting and to yielding when necessary. Moreover, there is an obstacle here to general innovations and to the impulses of reform. Reform never strikes a great number of matters at once. Since everything in this country is in bits and pieces, you can only change one thing at a time, and with each change, you only attack a small number of interests. For the same reason, you excite only a small number of passions. It is rare to proceed by the path of general reform because there are few things to which you can apply the same principle in England. (J. S. Mill).[156]

From the time of his first journey to England, Tocqueville had shared this sentiment: in that country, the poor man aspires to occupy the place of the rich and can sometimes succeed. "The French spirit is to want no superior. The English spirit is to want *inferiors.*"[157]

156. YTC, CX. Cf. *OC,* V, 2, p. 47.
157. *Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 47.
Mill explained the same idea in this way:

> Aristocracy in the mores./
> Aristocratic spirit./
> Spirit of equality, aristocratic spirit.
> [In the margin: The Whig who attacks the Lord honors him as a rich man.]
> Here you often find allied two sentiments that at first view seem contradictory; these are a very intense hostility toward the aristocracy and an infinite respect for the aristocrats. The privileges of the Lords are attacked, but you cannot believe what consideration there is for them as individuals, so that you see the most ardent democrat rant with an extreme exaggeration against the abusive power of an oligarchic minority and bow with humility before the Count or the Marquis of X, solely because

In *Social and Political State of France,* Tocqueville would note that the difference between the French aristocracy and the English aristocracy consists in the fact that only the English one is truly an aristocracy, that is to say a tiny part of society, having "qualities" such as blood, intelligence, money, culture, etc. In France, on the other hand, the sole quality of the aristocracy is birth, which makes it impossible for anyone to attain it. In the second part of *Democracy,* this idea would force Tocqueville to give full attention to the process of administrative centralization, inasmuch as it is the first and most powerful effect of the democratic revolution, and is capable of making its effects felt even on the English aristocracy.[158]

For Beaumont there was a totally different discovery. He who so vigorously defended the cause of the Indians and Blacks was struck by the situation of the Irish. He noted regarding them:

> Moral—History.
>
> I do not believe that the murder of nations is more legitimate than that of individuals.
>
> I declare that in covering the history of peoples, when I see the victors and the vanquished, I can very much admire the conqueror whose value shines before my eyes; but all the sympathies of my heart are for the conquered country. As long as a subject people exists, as long as it has not entirely disappeared under conquest, I make wishes for it, I nourish hopes, I have faith in its instincts of nationality; and in my dreams I see it shaking off the chains of servitude and cleansing itself of tyranny in the blood of its tyrants. If one day I learn that this people has expired with glory, I remain faithful to it, and I weep on its tomb. For to pardon a crime because

he is a Count or Marquis. Here we work hard to abolish privileges, but we respect those who possess them; we find that they are clever, because they have reached the goal that everyone targets. No one has the idea of blaming them for taking a place that is due not to morality and justice, but to their privileged position. For in English society, everything is privilege (Jh. Mill, 19 May. London). (Beaumont's note. YTC, CX).

158. During their journey, which took them to several large cities of England, Tocqueville and Beaumont observed the terrible effects of industrialization, which they could already have done in part during the journey to the United States. On this subject, they knew about the book by J. B. Say and about the treatise by Villeneuve-Bargemont. The famous description of Manchester is found in *Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, pp. 79–82.

it is successful is an odious and despicable action. It is a despicable action, commonly done.

(30 January 1836).[159]

The two friends divided subjects. To Tocqueville, America; to Beaumont, England,[160] and Beaumont intended to devote a book to the Irish cause. In 1837, he went to England for a second time and visited Ireland in order to complete his research on site. *L'Irlande, sociale, politique et religieuse* would be published in 1839.[161]

The manuscript of Beaumont's book contains criticisms in Tocqueville's hand. That of Tocqueville would be considered attentively by Beaumont before its publication. Their collaboration continued to include innumerable exchanges of ideas.[162]

The press gave *L'Irlande* a reserved reception, but the book received the approbation of English intellectuals. In October 1839, John Stuart Mill wrote to Beaumont:

159. YTC, CX.

160. Tocqueville explained this point in a letter of 5 May 1835 to his father. André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 229.

161. The second and third editions saw the light of day in 1839; the seventh and last, in 1863. The English translation appeared in 1839. The English translator took care to eliminate several passages critical of England; he summarized and altered a certain number of Beaumont's arguments.

162. Beaumont noted this idea of Tocqueville:

Brittany. Ireland.

Remarkable parallel between the province of Brittany in France and Ireland.

—Same origin.—Celtic population.

—Similarity in mores and in social state.

—Small farms in the two countries. Small-scale farming.

—Absence of luxury and no idea of material well-being; no efforts to gain it. Miserable hut in which the family pig grunts as a table companion.

—Eminently religious population, faithful—but not enlightened.

—Brittany is only separated by a river from Normandy where the taste for material well-being is so developed. In France we have England and Ireland in Normandy and Brittany.

—There is the similarity.

But differences—The Irishman is merry and fickle—The Breton melancholic and stubborn.

(Shouted by Tocqueville)

22 December (YTC, CX).

> I hardly know how to express to you the degree of my estimation of your book, in as measured terms as a sober man likes to use in expressing a deliberate judgment—but this I may say, in the confidence of being rather within than beside the mark—that the book not only displays a complete and easy mastery over all the social elements and agencies at work in Ireland, over the whole great period of Irish history and Irish civilization; but that it also manifests a degree of clear comprehension and accurate knowledge of the far more complicated and obscure phenomena of *English* society, never before even *approached* by any foreigner whom I know of, and by very, *very* few Englishmen.[163]

Like *Marie, L'Irlande* would be only a half-success. This second book was also the last. At one time pushed by Tocqueville to become interested in Austria, Beaumont would cease all important intellectual work following the death of one of his sons.

The Second *Democracy*

On 26 October 1835, Tocqueville married Mary Mottley, thus formalizing a relationship that was already several years old. Beaumont and Kergorlay were witnesses.

In 1828 or 1829, at Versailles, Tocqueville had met this English woman of bourgeois origin who lived with her aunt, Mrs. Belam.[164] The correspondence of Tocqueville and his wife has almost totally disappeared. The documents that remain attest to a certain discomfort, in the family as well as among a few friends, about a marriage judged disappointing.

On 15 November the couple went to Baugy, near Compiègne, close to Édouard de Tocqueville. That is where Alexis began to work on the second part of *Democracy.* His first plan was to divide the third volume into two parts:

163. Letter of J. S. Mill to Beaumont, 18 October 1839, YTC, CIe.

164. Concerning Mary Mottley, few things are known. See Antoine Rédier, *Comme disait Monsieur de Tocqueville,* pp. 122–28, and André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville,* pp. 50–56.

Two great divisions.
1. Influence of democracy on ideas.
2. Id. on sentiments.[165]

Then the outline became complicated:

Division to do perhaps.

Effects of democracy
1. On thought.
2. On the heart.
3. On habits.[166]

Little by little, the work took on its definitive form:

Plan of the second volume.

Sociability, sympathy, mores becoming milder, susceptibility, p. [blank] and dignity. All of that comes easily after individualism in order to demonstrate the types of relationships that can exist in a democratic society despite egoism.

The citizen, patriotism, the master and the servant, master and farmer, master and worker. All of that again comes easily after the introduction because it is principally individualism that modifies the relationships of all those people with each other.

Father, son, wife, woman, good morals. The mind is prep[ared] by what precedes to enter into families. Moreover, individualism again greatly modifies the relationships of those people.

Tone, manners, conversation, monotony of life, gravity, vanity. The chapters relating to the family have prepared the mind to descend easily into the small details of the social existence of the Americans.

Honor, ambition, revolution, military spirit, conquests, armies, perhaps a chapter that summarizes. These chapters, which perhaps I have not placed in the relative order that they should have vis-à-vis each other, elevate the mind of the reader and end the book on a high level.

There are three chapters that remain, and I do not know where to place them: Respect that is attached to all conditions, lack of susceptibilities, sentiment of dignity.

165. YTC, CVa, p. 6.
166. YTC, CVa, p. 6.

I believe, however, that they come after sociability./
Where to place equality—slavery?[167]

Individualism, which opened the book, would finally be placed at the beginning of the second part of the third volume. The idea of speaking again about slavery remained only a plan, but the principal ideas of the whole work were already present. The work of writing, with several interruptions,[168] would take four years (from November 1835 to November 1839).

In January 1836, following a division of family properties due to the death of his mother, Alexis received the château de Tocqueville and the title of count that came with it, although he would always refuse to use the title. He appeared hardly inclined in the beginning to spend much time in a cold and damp château. Various renovations that his wife would have done would be necessary before Tocqueville decided to live there for long periods. Many pages of the second *Democracy* would see the light of day there, sometimes under the critical eye of Corcelle, Beaumont, Kergorlay, or Ampère, regular guests at the château.

A large part of the first section of the book seemed finished when, in July, after the marriage of Gustave de Beaumont with Clémentine de Lafayette, Tocqueville and his wife left for Baden, in Switzerland. In November they returned to Baugy.[169] There, Tocqueville worked daily from 6:00 to 10:00 o'clock in the morning. The writing went well. Only one thing

167. YTC, CVa, pp. 28–30.

168. During their journey to England, Mill had begged the French visitors to contribute to the *London and Westminster Review* by writing articles on France and the United States. In 1836, Tocqueville sent Mill a first and only article on the social and political state of France before and after the Revolution, which was meant to be an introduction to a series of publications on France. "Political and Social Condition of France," *London and Westminster Review,* 25, 1836, pp. 137–69 (reproduced in *OC,* II, 1, pp. 33–66). The similarity between the first paragraphs of the article and the chapter on the philosophical method of the Americans is clear and enlightening.

169. The long stays of Tocqueville at Baugy make it difficult to measure the influence exercised by Édouard.

was missing for the author: "a good *instrument of conversation,* I needed you [Beaumont] or Louis."[170]

During the following months, Tocqueville took careful note of all the information, of every conversation that could be useful for his work. He interviewed Thiers on the problem of centralization, Kergorlay on the army, Charles Stoffels on literature. He also met an American named Robinson and a number of other people.[171]

From mid-July to mid-August the Corcelles stayed at Tocqueville. At the end of July, the Beaumonts joined the small set. In the intellectual circle thus constituted by Tocqueville only one member was missing, Louis de Kergorlay, whom he did not hesitate to call his master.[172]

In January 1838, at Baugy, Tocqueville reviewed the chapter on honor. March and April were devoted to the question of centralization, to the army and to the preparation of the fourth and last part of the book. On 15 May,

170. Letter of 22 November 1836 to Beaumont, *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 174. The same month, Tocqueville wrote to Kergorlay in very similar terms: "I feel the importance of this second work, which will find criticism wide-awake and will not be able to take the public by surprise. So I want to do my best. There is not a day so to speak that I do not feel your absence. [. . .] There are three men with whom I live a bit every day, Pascal, Montesquieu and Rousseau. I miss a fourth who is you." Letter of 10 November 1836, *OC,* XIII, 1, p. 418.

171. He found the time to think about the continuation of his work on pauperism and asked Beaumont to bring him all available information about the savings banks and the English pawnshops. There is a list of questions from Tocqueville for Beaumont in YTC, CXIb.13. Cf. *OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 185, 191, 193, 196, and 200. He did not find the time to choose some unpublished excerpts from *Democracy* for the *London and Westminster Review* as Mill had requested (*OC,* VIII, 1, p. 187).

Tocqueville also dedicated his efforts to two bids, one to enter the Chamber of Deputies in November and a second to get himself elected to the Académie française. These two attempts failed. Entry to the Académie des sciences morales et politiques was seen by Tocqueville only as a consolation prize that would make his entry to the Académie française more difficult. He would enter there on 24 December 1841. He published, in addition, two letters on Algeria, on 23 June and 22 August 1837, in *La presse de Seine-et-Oise.*

172. "For, after all, and without giving a useless compliment, I believe you are my master." Letter to Kergorlay, 4 September 1837, *OC,* XIII, 1, p. 472. Cf. Kergorlay's answer, 30 September, *ibid.,* p. 477. Alexis was then working on the chapters on good morals. In September, he laid down the foundations of the chapter on American manners.

Corcelle and Ampère were present for a reading of the chapter on revolutions. In July, August, and September, the last chapters took their definitive form. The last two chapters on centralization and the idea of equality grew in length and purpose. The only thing remaining was to revise the chapter on the philosophical method of the Americans and the one on general ideas.

On 19 October 1838, Tocqueville would write to Beaumont: "I have just written, my dear friend, the last word of the last chapter of my book."[173]

The revision of the whole book would occupy all of the following year. Kergorlay, who spent most of the autumn at Tocqueville [the village], came to help the author who worked to revise the first part of his book. Unsatisfied, Tocqueville had burned it.

In January 1839, Tocqueville read part of his manuscript to Chateaubriand, but confessed to Beaumont that he did not think he would be able to advance much in the revision of the whole book before the month of March. The work stretched until mid-November, the date when Tocqueville returned to Paris with a copy of his manuscript in order to have it read and approved a final time by Beaumont and Kergorlay.

Tocqueville had spoken to his correspondents about a book on "American manners." The title that tempted Tocqueville was: "The Influence of Equality on the Ideas and the Sentiments of Men." The book appeared in April 1840, however, with the same title as that of 1835.

The reception of the second part was not as unanimously laudatory as what had accompanied the appearance of the first volume. More theoretical and less descriptive, the second *Democracy* found a public little prepared for the reading of a philosophical work of such length and ambition. The criticism that appeared in this regard in *The Examiner* reflected the tone.[174]

Hunt's Merchant Magazine noted: "In our deliberate judgment, it is the most original, comprehensive, and profound treatise that has ever appeared regarding our republic."[175] The prestigious *Blackwood's Edinburgh Maga-*

173. *OC,* VIII, 1, p. 321.
174. *The Examiner,* 17 May 1840.
175. *Hunt's Merchant Magazine,* 3 July 1840, p. 443.

zine, acknowledging that the second part did not merit the unconditional approval given to the first, added: "It is a superstructure of theorizing without any base to support it."[176]

If favorable reviews were many—and in particular the one of John Stuart Mill must be pointed out[177]—the same judgment was found just about everywhere in the English press: "too great a disposition to theorize,"[178] or again: "Perhaps this method of generalizing facts is occasionally pushed too far."[179] The verdict seemed definitive. Tocqueville's contemporaries seemed little inclined to accept this *philosophy of democracy* that the author was offering to their understanding. The appearance of the first volume of the *Democracy* had elicited nearly seventy commentaries; that of the second brought forth scarcely half that number.

In the months immediately following the publication, Tocqueville wrote little and so to speak made no allusion to his book. Elected deputy on 2 March 1839, he intended to concern himself more with his new duties.

"Nothing has been and remains more contrary to my tastes than to accept the condition of author in this world," he wrote to Royer-Collard in 1839, explaining:

> That is entirely contrary to my way of seeing what is desirable in this life. So my firm wish, after finishing this book and whatever its fate, is to work for myself and to write no longer for the public, unless a very important and *very natural* occasion presented itself, which is not probable. I am pushed to this determination not only by the desire to set myself apart from authors strictly speaking, but also by a certain pride that persuades me that I will find no subject as grand as the one that I have just treated and that, consequently, I would be demeaning myself by taking up the pen again.[180]

176. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 48, no. 298 (1840): 463–78, p. 463.
177. *Edinburgh Review* 145 (1840): 1–25.
178. *Dublin University Magazine* 16, no. 95 (1840): 544–63, p. 563.
179. *The New York Review* 7, no. 13 (1840): p. 234.
180. Letter to Royer-Collard, 20 November 1838, *OC,* XI, p. 74. Cf. the letter to Corcelle, 25 June 1838, *OC,* XV, 1, pp. 100–101.

The occasion would not present itself before 1852, when, forced to abandon all political activity following the coming to power of a person of whom he highly disapproved, Tocqueville decided to take up the pen again in order to remind the French of the events that had brought them liberty. That was the beginning of work on *L'Ancien régime et la révolution.*

II[181]

To Understand the Revolution

"Since, like Perrin Dandin, I am driven by the desire to judge without the power to do so, I need to keep going."[182] Tocqueville's identification with the main character of the *Plaideurs* can probably be shared by an entire generation of judges who, following the revolutions of 1789 and 1830, had to devote themselves to finding a new equilibrium for society. As Ortega remarked, the solution to the political question was above all an eminently personal problem for Tocqueville and his contemporaries.[183] Ultras and liberals, 1789 and 1793, aristocracy and democracy, liberty and equality, monarchy and republic, these were so many opposites that required a choice to be made.

In this context, where to place the author of *Democracy*? The question continues to be asked.[184] The intellectual conversation has refined his thought and made his adjectives more nuanced; that does not prevent the labels from remaining very close to those of 1835. Tocqueville is in turn called a conservative, a liberal, a conservative liberal, a liberal conservative, a Burkean conservative, a liberal *despite himself,* a liberal aristocrat, a strange liberal—in short, the confusion about his work continues.

For it to be otherwise would be difficult. The *Democracy,* which sets forth as well one of the most fascinating interpretations of the French Revolution

181. The interpretation I am offering here is necessarily limited.

182. Letter from Tocqueville to the Countess de Pisieux, 5 July 1833, YTC, CIf.

183. "Tocqueville y su tiempo," in *Meditación de Europa,* Madrid. (Revista de Occidente, 1966), pp. 135–41.

184. There are dozens of books devoted to Tocqueville's thought, but I limit myself to pointing out those of Jean-Louis Benoît, *Tocqueville moraliste* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004); Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989); Jean-Claude Lamberti, *Tocqueville et les deux démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983); Pierre Manent, *Tocqueville et la nature de la démocratie* (Paris: Julliard, 1982); Nicola Matteucci, *Alexis de Tocqueville* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990); the brief introduction to the abridged edition of *Democracy* by Dalmacio Negro (Madrid: Aguilar, 1971); and Sheldon S. Wolin, *Tocqueville Between Two Worlds* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

ever made, attempts indeed, by using the American "mirror,"[185] to create a political philosophy capable of explaining (and producing) revolution and counter-revolution.[186]

"Placed in the middle of a rapid river," writes Tocqueville, "we obstinately fix our eyes on some debris that we still see on the bank, while the torrent carries us away and pushes us backward toward the abyss."[187] Amid this dangerous revolutionary turbulence, there is a pressing need to find a path and a bedrock somewhere; and this is what forces the author to seek an explanation for the Revolution from the very first pages of the *Democracy.*[188] If we must await *L'Ancien régime et la révolution* for Tocqueville to give a fuller and more detailed interpretation of the great historical upheaval, it is no less true that the principal lines of his theory of revolution are already present in the two *Democracies.*

Tocqueville's point of view can be somewhat roughly summarized by asserting that for him the French Revolution was neither a true revolution, nor a *French* revolution.

The Revolution was not a true revolution because authentic revolutions take place at the level of mentalities, ideas, beliefs, habits of the heart, of

185. "I did not want to do a portrait, but to present a mirror," Tocqueville confessed to Ampère. Jean-Jacques Ampère, "Alexis de Tocqueville," *Correspondant* 47 (1859): p. 322.

186. "The Revolution that reduced to dust the aristocratic society in which our fathers lived is the great event of the time. It has changed everything, modified everything, altered everything" II, p. 690, note c.

Not by chance did Tocqueville choose as a matter of fact to publish the chapter on revolutions separately, before the second volume. The chapter on revolutions undoubtedly constitutes the axis around which the whole book turns; cf. Alexis de Tocqueville, "Des revolutions dans les sociétés nouvelles," *Revue des deux mondes,* XXII, 1840, pp. 322–34.

187. I, p. 514, note o. Cf. I, p. 12, note r.

188. The unpublished texts of this edition tend to erase a certain number of differences between *Democracy* and *L'Ancien régime et la révolution.* Tocqueville is an author who treats a very small number of subjects that he considers and studies many times in each of his writings, while keeping them all interrelated, like the chapters of the same book. So in a way we have something of a *Democracy* that extends from 1835 to 1859.

all the things that, using once again the meaning of the word *mores,*[189] he designates by the term *mœurs.*[190]

Every historical change necessarily begins, according to Tocqueville, at the level of ideas. In turn, the latter transform and are transformed by the social and material conditions of a society. These, according to Tocqueville, constitute the social state of a society.[191]

> Political societies are not made by their laws, but are prepared in advance by the sentiments, beliefs, ideas, the habits of the hearts and minds of the men who are part of them, and by what nature and education have made those men. If this truth does not emerge from all parts of my book, if it does not in this sense constantly bring readers back to themselves, if it does not point out to them at every moment, without ever blatantly displaying the pretension of teaching them, the sentiments, ideas, mores that alone can lead to prosperity and public liberty, the vices and errors that on the contrary inevitably push prosperity and public liberty away, I will

189. The whole body of the ideas and the mores of a people form its character, and on this point Tocqueville recalls Montesquieu:

> ≠There is indeed in the bent of the ideas and tastes of a people a hidden force that struggles with advantage against revolutions and time. This intellectual physiognomy of nations, which is called their character, is found throughout all the centuries of their history and amid the innumerable changes that take place in the social state, beliefs and laws. A strange thing! What is least perceptible and most difficult to define among a people is at the same time what you find most enduring among them. Everything changes among them except the character, which disappears only with nations themselves≠ (I, p. 344, note y).

190. "So by this word I understand the whole moral and intellectual state of a people" (I, p. 466).

Montesquieu in fact remarks: "The customs of a people in slavery are part of its servitude; those of a free people are part of its liberty." *De l'esprit des lois,* book XIX, ch. XXVII, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1951), II, p. 382. For Tocqueville, the mores of a people constitute nearly its *entire* liberty.

191. Tocqueville did not believe that he had resolved the question of knowing if ideas are the result or the cause of the social state. "Is the social state the result of ideas or are the ideas the result of the social state?" II, p. 748, note f. Ideas will act, alternately, as effect and as cause.

not have attained the principal and, so to speak, the only goal that I had in view.[192]

The social state in turn shapes the political state.[193] (Today we would speak about society and state.) This explains why, in France as in the United States,[194] the people are sovereign, for if the French do not live in a condition of liberty strictly speaking, they have already learned to think of themselves as equals.[195] The material and intellectual conditions of a society modify and are changed by ideas and sentiments; and once the social state has been changed, the legal and political institutions adapt little by little.

192. Letter to Corcelle, 17 September 1853, *OC,* XV, 2, p. 81. This is so true that a change in the law (the abolition of slavery, for example) is useless and even negative if it is not accompanied by a change in the intellectual world (the idea that the Black man is henceforth equal to the white man). In this sense Tocqueville can say that, if he had the power, he would not immediately decide on the abolition of slavery. He was convinced that, without a previous radical change in the mores, the situation of the free Black would probably be worse than the situation of the slave.

193. This term reappears from time to time (II, p. 1262, note b).

With this supposition, Tocqueville places himself at the origin of the modern social sciences. If his work attracts sociologists as well as historians, critics, and political scientists, it is because in his work the classic elements of political philosophy are beginning to separate and take form as sociology, history, or the political sciences. In the same way, if *Democracy,* and especially the second part, has not sufficiently gained the attention of researchers in the political sciences, it is undoubtedly because it requires the latter to go beyond the position of historians of ideas in order to be political philosophers for a time.

194. In the United States, the dogma of the sovereignty of the people is not an isolated doctrine that is attached neither to the habits nor to the ensemble of dominant ideas; you can on the contrary envisage it as the last link in a chain of opinions that envelops the entire Anglo-American world. Providence has given to each individual, whatever he is, the degree of reason necessary for him to be able to direct himself in the things that interest him exclusively. Such is the great maxim on which in the United States civil and political society rests: the father of the family applies it to his children, the master to his servants, the town to those it administers, the province to the town, the state to the provinces, the Union to the states. Extended to the whole of the nation, it becomes the dogma of the sovereignty of the people.

[≠So the republican principle of the sovereignty of the people is not only a political principle, but also a civil principle.≠] (I, p. 633)

195. II, p. 1033, note 1. Did Tocqueville participate in Beaumont's plan to present an essay on the influence of laws on mores and of mores on laws for the Montyon competition in 1830? See YTC, CXIb6.

"In the long run, political society cannot fail to become the expression and the image of civil society." Sovereignty of the people is born as public opinion.[196]

That is why the true revolution took place largely before 1789, accelerated by a change that was above all European in nature,[197] that began with the Reformation, continued with Bacon and Descartes, and then gave the Enlightenment universal ideas, applicable in all periods and to all parts of the world.

"[The Revolution] was just a violent and rapid process by the aid of which the political state was adapted to the social state, facts to ideas, and laws to mores,"[198] Tocqueville will repeat in the *Ancien Régime.* It was nothing more than the abrupt adaptation of the real to the ideal, or more precisely to an abstract philosophy formed from theories that had not been refined, called into question, or confirmed by political practice.

The Old Regime wanted to ignore social changes and, by preventing the slow adaptation of the political to the social, had created the conditions for its own downfall. The revolutionaries, removed from the political practice that would have led them to test and adapt their theories to the material and social circumstances of France, tried for their part to make the legal and political world conform to abstract and universal principles that were far from the social state.

A difficulty unfailingly appears, however. If the Revolution indeed had as its point of departure an intellectual movement that predated it, the vast changes whose arrival it marked cannot be completed as long as differences exist between the social and political ideas of the French and their legal and

196. "What is the sovereign rule of public [v: national] opinion to which all the English of the last [century (Ed.)] constantly declared that you must submit, if not a still obscure notion of the democratic dogma of the sovereignty of the people?" II, p. 1033, note e.

197. "The French Revolution, in my eyes, is a *European* event, and everything that happened in the same period in Europe, principally in Germany, interests me nearly as much as what [took (Ed.)] place among us" Letter to Charles Monnard, 5 October 1856. With the kind permission of the Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire de Lausanne.

198. *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 66.

social institutions.[199] This raises the following question: can the Revolution end? Are France and Europe condemned to an eternal cycle of revolutions and counter-revolutions? How can you stop a revolution that is constantly unfolding?

Tocqueville observed again in 1850:

> Our country is calm and more prosperous than we could believe after such violent crises. But confidence in the future is lacking and although sixty years of Revolution have made this feeling of instability less prejudicial to social progress and less painful to us than it would be to other peoples, it has nonetheless very unfortunate results. This great nation is entirely in the state of mind of a sailor at sea or a soldier in the field. It does as little of the work of each day as possible, without worrying about tomorrow. But such a state is precarious and dangerous. Moreover, it is not peculiar to us. In all of continental Europe, except Russia, you see society in labor and the old world finally falling into ruins. Trust that all the restorations of old powers that are being made around us are only temporary happenings that do not prevent the great drama from following its course. This drama is the complete destruction of the old society and in its place the creation of I do not know what human fabric whose form the mind cannot yet clearly see.[200]

Such are the circumstances surrounding Tocqueville's project of creating a new political science that would succeed in explaining the past and the

199. Tocqueville noted that Napoleon, not wanting to give democratic political laws to France, had agreed to a body of social laws much more democratic than American laws and thus, very unwillingly, had accelerated the arrival of democracy. For the same reason, the primacy of the social over the political, Tocqueville asserted: "I would believe the future of liberty more assured with a government that would have many political rights and few civil rights than with a government that would have few political rights and many civil rights." (II, p. 1230, note p).

200. Letter to Edward Everett, 15 February 1850, Massachusetts Historical Society. The preface to the 1848 edition of *Democracy* (IV, p. 1373) repeats the same idea.

"There is only a single [revolution], a revolution always the same across various fortunes and passions, that our fathers saw begin and that, in all probability, we will not see end" *Souvenirs, OC,* XII, p. 30.

future, the old regime and the new, or, to reuse his terminology, aristocracy and democracy.[201]

"There is a country in the world," we read in the introduction to the first volume, "where the great social revolution that I am speaking about seems more or less to have reached its natural limits; it came about there in a simple and easy way, or rather it can be said that this country sees the results of the democratic revolution that is taking place among us, without having had the revolution itself."[202]

Tocqueville intends to determine whether American society offers the sole example in the world of an exceptional situation in which the ideal easily shapes the real, in which the social state coincides with the political state, in which the entire world is "a malleable material that man turns and shapes as he wills."[203] On this strange continent, it seems that the dream of the French and of the Europeans can be realized without the need for a revolution,[204] and that their abstract, rational, and theoretical principles are real, concrete, and inductive there.

But, if the exceptional physical and intellectual conditions of America alone explain the success of democracy, there is no hope that Europe could ever know the democratic state without continual revolutions.

The first impressions of the United States, especially of the West, confirm the existence of an America that does not need revolution. The American frontier, the great wilderness that extends to the Pacific Ocean, offers a space in which ideas transform reality without encountering obstacles and

201. Tocqueville's two books thus answer the desire to elucidate first the new regime and the Revolution (*Democracy*), then *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution.*

202. I, p. 27. The same idea appears, for example, at the beginning of the second volume: "The Americans have a democratic social state and a democratic constitution, but they have not had a democratic revolution. They arrived on the soil that they occupy more or less as we see them. That is very important." II, p. 708.

203. To Ernest de Chabrol, letter of 9 June 1831, YTC, BIa2.

204. "The Americans seemed only to have carried out what our writers had imagined; they gave the substance of reality to what we were busy dreaming" *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 199.

in a transparent way, so to speak.[205] Tocqueville will perfect and complicate his theory as his journey moves ahead, but the pioneer of *Democracy* especially announces the democratic man described at length in the second volume of the work.

"Everything that is good and evil in American society is found in such relief [in the West] that you would say it was one of those books published in large type to teach children to read," already notes the traveler in a letter to his mother. "Everything there is jarring and exaggerated. Nothing has yet taken its definitive place. [. . .] In the west no one has been able to make himself known or has had the time to establish his credit. Consequently democracy, without this final barrier, appears with all of its distinctive characteristics, its fickleness, its envious passions, its instability and its restless character."[206]

The pioneer is, necessarily, occupied entirely by the search for a minimum of commodities. Withdrawn from the rest of the world, isolated in his cabin, his only concern is the yield of his field on which his family's subsistence depends. Each of his movements is dictated by the necessity of the survival and the protection of his small world. His generosity toward the stranger who appears at his door is nothing more than the fruit of calculation; it comes from reason and not from the heart; it is an investment.[207] Obsession with material well-being, individualism, and interest well understood define, apparently accidentally and temporarily, life on the frontier, but they run the risk of becoming permanent conditions for the citizen of every democratic country.

So if North America does not need revolution, it is because the process of adaptation and struggle among philosophy, social state, and political condition is non-existent. Ideas and reality coincide; reason appears covered only by the clothing of the present. In order to be free and happy, it is enough for the American to want to be so.[208] No need for struggle or confrontation, no need for the complex interpenetration, necessarily slow, of

205. The first thing that the pioneer does is to clear his property, to chop down the trees, to open up his view. The first symbol of civilization is the absence of trees.

206. Letter of 6 December 1831, YTC, BIa1, pp. 54–56, and *OCB,* VII, p. 90.

207. II, p. 1289.

208. I, p. 276.

ideas with habits and laws; nowhere are there ruins, the past, and signs of the past. "The Union . . . profits from the experience of the old peoples of Europe, without being obliged, like them, to make use of the past and to adapt the past to the present; it is not forced, as they are, to accept an immense heritage handed down by its fathers, a mixture of glory and misery, of national friendships and hatreds."[209]

The United States has the privilege therefore of being able to enjoy the results of European thought without being encumbered by the heavy baggage of history. "In America," notes Tocqueville, "society seems to live from day to day, like an army in the field."[210]

Tocqueville comments on the uncommon position of the New World, which anchors it in an eternal present: "≠For the American, the past is in a way like the future: it does not exist. He sees nowhere the natural limit that nature has put on the efforts of man; according to him what is not, is what has not yet been tried.≠"[211]

The pioneer is, in a way, the last link in an historical chain that begins in Europe and ends in the American *wilderness,* where he inhabits a present

209. I, p. 369.

"For him [the American] the possible has hardly any limit. To change is to improve; he has constantly before his eyes the image of indefinite perfection that throws deep within his heart an extraordinary restlessness and a great distaste for the present" (II, p. 935, note b).

210. I, p. 331.

211. I, p. 643, note n.

> The American inhabits a land of wonders, around him everything is constantly stirring, and each movement seems to be an improvement. So the idea of the new is intimately linked in his mind to the idea of the better. Nowhere does he see the limit that nature might have put on the efforts of man; in his eyes what is not is what has not yet been attempted (I, p. 643).

Tocqueville specifies about the frontier:

> In whatever direction you looked, your eye searched in vain for the spire of a Gothic church tower, the wooden cross that marks the road, or the moss-covered doorway of the presbytery. These venerable remnants of ancient Christian civilization have not been carried into the wilderness; nothing there yet awakens the idea of the past or of the future. You do not even find places of rest consecrated to those who are no more. Death has not had the time to reclaim its sphere or mark out its field (II, p. 1346).

without limit.[212] In the American West the principal characteristics of society are also missing: "The new states of the West already have inhabitants; society still does not exist,"[213] writes Tocqueville. In the West, the only common ideas and the sole bond between the most immediate past and the present are found in the weak intellectual network created by the mail and newspapers.[214]

Is the destiny of democratic man to inhabit a world without social exchanges, an eternal cycle of death and emptiness, such as the American forest or the ocean,[215] a definitive present? You could think so. The pioneer clears an opening in the forest, cuts down the trees and in his field leaves the trunks that he does not take the trouble to uproot. He builds himself a cabin and marks with a subtle trace of history the woods that surround him. As soon as he disappears, nature takes back its domain. Then nothing more remains of the passage of man except "a few remnants falling into rot that in a bit of time will have ceased to exist."[216]

Is this the price to pay in order to live in a world without revolution?

212. The Indians find themselves in a quite similar situation. Beaumont writes about them: "Focused on the necessity of the present and fears of the future, the past and its memories have lost all their power over them" (*Marie,* II, p. 297). Citing Clark and Cass, Tocqueville repeats the same idea: "He [the Indian] easily forgets the past, and is not interested in the future." I, p. 527, note 7. The same thing can be said about the Black race, which has left its history in another continent.

213. I, p. 86.

214. "The only historical monuments of the United States are newspapers. If an issue happens to be missing, the chain of time is as if broken: present and past are no longer joined." I, p. 331.

215. *A Fortnight in the Wilderness,* II, p. 1339.
Also "rivers . . . are roads that respect no trails." II, p. 1353.

216. *Journey to Lake Oneida,* IV, p. 1301.

> Sometimes man moves so quickly that the wilderness reappears behind him. The forest has only bent under his feet; the moment he passes, it rises up again. It is not unusual, while traveling through the new states of the West, to encounter abandoned dwellings in the middle of the woods; often you find the ruins of a cabin in the deepest solitude, and you are amazed while crossing rough-hewn clearings that attest simultaneously to human power and inconstancy. Among these abandoned fields, over these day-old ruins, the ancient forest does not delay growing new shoots; the animals retake possession of their realm; nature comes happily to cover the vestiges of man with green branches and flowers and hastens to make the ephemeral trace of man disappear. (I, p. 461).

The question is posed in these terms. So the new political science that Tocqueville imagines and develops in *Democracy in America* is going to have as its first objective man's return to society and to history.[217]

The Theoretician of History

It is undoubtedly difficult to find a period when the question of history attracted more attention than in the first half of the nineteenth century. Uncertainty about the future forces minds to look back: you had to try to place the Revolution in history, to assimilate it as the past, to understand it. In order to do this, liberals, like conservatives, court Clio. Politicians make history and write it; poets and novelists who claim to be historians capture imaginations and, at times, get involved in politics; all offer the world an uncommon example of political practice and political theory.

While Burke and the conservatives explain that the French Revolution was nothing more than an aberration that, far from history, broke its rhythm, the liberals concentrate their efforts on demonstrating the inevitable character of history. At first view, Tocqueville places himself on this side because he seems to follow the liberal theory of the inevitability of history and particularly the historical interpretation of Guizot.

There is no qualifying term that has been more often associated with Tocqueville, the historian-politician, than that of fatalist. Certain critics have spoken about determinism[218] or providentialism; others have sought reasons of a pedagogic nature in his use of the idea of the inevitable movement toward equality of conditions.[219] How can Tocqueville, who hates all forms of fatalism, who speaks of liberty as an almost holy thing, who asserts

217. Ampère said with a great deal of wisdom about *Democracy:* "In short, at the core of the whole book stirs the question of time" (*Correspondance avec Ampère, OC,* XI, p. xvi).

218. Jean-Claude Lamberti, *La notion d'individualisme chez Tocqueville* (Paris: PUF, 1970).

219. Marvin Zetterbaum, *Tocqueville and the Problem of Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 17. Cf. I, pp. 10–12, note q.

that the goal of his book is to reveal very clearly that "whatever the tendencies of the social state, men can always modify them and ward off the bad tendencies while appropriating the good,"[220] how can this same Tocqueville talk at the same time about an "irresistible movement" of democracy and make it a "providential fact"?

At once simple and complex, his answer consists of saying that inevitability concerns only the arrival of social equality. With him, and with a certain number of others, this fact receives the name democracy. In the sense that, in the long run, social equality produces legal and political equality, Tocqueville's theory can be called deterministic, and the arrival of democracy is inevitable. Once intellectual equality is proclaimed (each man has the same faculties for attaining truth as another), the transformation of social and political conditions is no more than a question of time; in terms of Tocqueville's thought, it is inevitable and even desired by God.

Once you eliminate all secondary causes, Tocqueville continues, all the revolutions in the world have been and are made for the sole purpose of increasing or decreasing equality, which is the foundation or the generating fact of the revolutionary motor. Revolutions have always consisted and still consist of setting the rich against the poor and the poor against the rich.

But this determinism, which is as much logical as historical, is in no way incompatible with the passionate defense of liberty, because, for Tocqueville, the movement toward equality is independent of the development of liberty. The latter is the true human element of historical change. In other words, the inevitability of democracy, understood as the adaptation of the political state to the social state, does not determine the historical evolution of liberty: equality is as good an ally of despotism as of liberty.

So the presumption of attaining equality of social and political conditions makes the classical typology of political regimes meaningless. Whether it takes the form of public opinion or whether it presents itself as it is,

220. II, p. 694, note m.

sovereignty of the people makes possible only two types of regimes: the republican (or liberal) regime or the despotic regime, liberty or despotism. In the face of this alternative, it is man who chooses and not destiny that imposes.

This understanding of history, as Marx remarked, puts Tocqueville closer to Bossuet than to Guizot.[221] Like the bishop of Meaux, Tocqueville believes that all the facts of history obey a divine plan, the meaning of which escapes us, but one that men can predict and whose general tendencies they can discover.[222]

The action of man, says Tocqueville, always takes place within a narrow circle. It has no meaning if it is situated outside this space. Even if man is incapable of imagining what is going to follow, of reading the plans of Providence, he can, within the domain reserved to him, recognize a law of the evolution of history and of intelligence.

The final stage, that of equality, closes the cycle of history. At the beginning of history, man, isolated and savage, is equal to his fellows in barbarism. He has no need of government.

> There are few peoples who can do without government in this way. Such a state of things has never been able to subsist except at the two extremes of civilization. The savage man, who has only his physical needs to satisfy, counts only on himself. For the civilized man to be able to do the same, he must have reached the social state in which his enlightenment allows him to see clearly what is useful for him, and in which his passions do not prevent him from acting on it."[223]

So the absence of government and equality are found only at the two ends of civilization: "Savages are equal among themselves because they are

221. The Anglophile attitude of Guizot bothered Tocqueville, who was incapable of accepting that the model of the English revolution was applicable to France. These differences of opinion did not pass unnoticed. After the publication of the *Democracy* of 1840, Guizot wrote to his former student: "Why don't we think alike? I do not find any good reason." Roland-Pierre Marcel, *Essai politique sur Alexis de Tocqueville* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1910, p. 319). Also see Aurelian Craiutu, *Liberalism Under Siege* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2003).

222. See Bossuet, *Discours sur l'histoire universelle,* part III, section II, entitled: "The revolutions of empires have particular causes that princes must study."

223. *Voyage,* pp. 89–90.

all equally weak and ignorant. Very civilized men can all become equal because they all have at their disposal analogous means to attain comfort and happiness."[224]

For Tocqueville, as we see, history is neither the progressive, rational, and necessary development of the idea of liberty, nor the advance, impossible to contain, of the middle classes, as Guizot thought. The author of *Democracy* notes a form of liberty appropriate to each period and each country.[225] Liberty understood in this way is therefore as ancient, as Madame de Staël calls it, as it is modern, as Benjamin Constant describes it. So post-revolutionary liberty is not and cannot be that of the Old Regime.[226] In the same way, a form of despotism corresponds to each period.

The novelty of Tocqueville's theory is to assert that in order to reach the final stage of history, the point at which true equality and liberty coincide, the aristocratic stage is absolutely necessary as an intermediate moment. If "it is in losing their liberty that men acquired the means to reconquer it,"[227] true liberty always requires passing by way of servitude.

This constitutes a first way to put face to face the Old Regime and democracy, to make aristocracy an inevitable moment of history, and then to move beyond it. If, in the state of barbarism, men cannot become civilized

224. "Mémoire sur paupérisme," republished in *Commentaire,* 30, 1985, p. 633.

225. "I would regard it as a great misfortune for humankind if liberty, in all places, had to occur with the same features." I, p. 513.

226. Guizot had, however, distinguished between two forms of liberty: 1. Liberty as independence of the individual, who has only his own will as law. This is the barbaric and anti-social liberty of the childhood of nations, natural liberty. 2. Liberty as independence from any will that is different and contrary to reason. Moral liberty or liberty by right. The survival of society demands the submission of all individuals to a common rule that cannot exist if natural liberty subsists to its full extent. *Journal des cours publics de jurisprudence, histoire et belles-lettres* (Paris: au bureau du journal, 1821–1822), I, pp. 248–52, lecture 23.

227. "I ≠{think that it is in losing their liberty that men acquired the means to reconquer it}≠ that it is under an aristocracy or under a prince that men still half-savage have gathered the various notions that later would allow them to live civilized, equal and free." II, p. 879, note f.

as long as they are equal,[228] it is aristocracy that, by creating a class free to dedicate itself to the works of the mind, can invent the general and universal ideas that will lead to its own destruction and to the appearance of democracy (understood as equality of conditions).

The first step toward equality was taken in the Middle Ages when peoples began to travel, to enter into contact with each other, to imitate each other. Each nation little by little lost confidence in its particular laws and in its own organization; the idea of rules common to everyone occurred to men. France placed itself at the head of these intellectual, moral, and political changes, even if the impulse that gave them birth was more European than specifically French.

If the course of history follows the change in mentalities which is, in turn, the effect and the cause of the social state,[229] and if the latter little by little transforms the political state, that is to say, laws and institutions, then it is not surprising that Tocqueville devotes the first pages of *Democracy* to philosophy.

A Philosophy of Action

Perhaps the word *philosophy* is not totally accurate when applied to the theory of Tocqueville, who said that he had a horror of philosophy and who wrote: "Philosophy is in fact only the complete exercise of thought separate from the practice of action."[230]

Tocqueville's very principle is to draw everything out of himself. He does the work of a researcher and does not neglect brochures, reports, collections of laws. But the list of works consulted in the writing of *Democracy in America* does not include books of philosophy.[231]

228. "If nations had begun with democratic government, I doubt they would ever have become civilized." I, p. 332.

Even industry follows this general law of evolution. The manufacturing aristocracy is the equivalent of the landed aristocracy. II, p. 980, note b.

229. Economic conditions are part of the social state, and Tocqueville judges them to be of secondary interest.

230. II, p. 739, note c.

"For no one is less philosophical than I, who preaches to you." *OCB,* VI, p. 370.

231. See vol. IV, pp. 1377–95.

Tocqueville does not like philosophy. He calls it the "essence of all gibberish,"[232] and a "voluntary torment that man consented [cf. note 242 below] [. . .] to inflict on himself."[233]

The matter is clear from the beginning of the work of writing the introduction to *Democracy.* "The author of this work," we read in a draft, "wanted to write a book of politics and not of philosophy."[234]

The imperatives of the history of France forbid Tocqueville, as politician and as the author of *Souvenirs,* to forget the practical side of political theory. Thought separated from action is philosophy. For Tocqueville, reflection joined to practice constitutes the nature of what he calls his "political science."[235] This does not prevent him, however, from falling into the trap of the celebrated aphorism of Pascal: "To mock philosophy is truly to philosophize."[236]

The philosophic aspect of Tocqueville's thought appears in the form of anti-positivism.[237] "≠In all human events," he writes, "there is an immense portion abandoned to chance or to secondary causes that escapes entirely from forecasts and calculations.≠"[238]

Tocqueville's certitude about an impenetrable divine plan and his religious beliefs prevent him from falling into the sensual philosophy of the period and into positivism.[239] He accepts the existence of absolute ideas as

232. Draft of a letter to Le Peletier d'Aunay, 8 November 1831, YTC, BIa2.

233. To Charles Stoffels, 22 October 1831, YTC, BIa1, and *OCB,* VII, pp. 83–84. See *OCB,* VI, p. 370.

234. YTC, CVk, 1, p. 73.

235. Tocqueville thinks that Thomas More would not have written *Utopia* if he had been able to change the government of England. He also thinks that the Germans do philosophy because they cannot generalize their ideas in politics (II, p. 727, note b).

236. Pensée 513 (Ed. Lafuma). Cited by Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento politico de Tocqueville,* p. 42.

237. The predilection of Tocqueville for Plato is symptomatic: "I consider him a poor politician, but the philosopher has always appeared to me superior to all others and his aim, which consists of introducing morality as much as possible into politics, admirable." *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 41. Cf. *Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 292.

238. I, p. 574, note b.

239. "There is nothing so difficult to appreciate as a fact." I, p. 343.

"The world is a book entirely closed to man." I, p. 383, note m. Also see I, p. 574.

well as their unknowable character.[240] A first conclusion results: every system, every man that claims to discover absolute truth is, for that reason alone, in error; you can advance only hypotheses.

> There is no man in the world who has ever found, and it is nearly certain that none will ever be met who will find the central ending point for, I am not saying all the beams of general truth, which are united only in God alone, but even for all the beams of a particular truth. Men grasp fragments of truth, but never truth itself. This admitted, the result would be that every man who presents a complete and absolute system, by the sole fact that his system is complete and absolute, is almost certainly in a state of error or falsehood, and that every man who wants to impose such a system on his fellows by force must *ipso facto* and without preliminary examination of his ideas be considered as a tyrant and an enemy of the human species.[241]

If absolute truth existed, the constant, complex interconnections of the elements of the motor of history would cease. The consequence of this provisional nature of all intellectual study is doubt, which Tocqueville considers characteristic of man, and in particular of philosophy.[242]

On this point, he summarizes his thought in this way for Charles Stoffels:

240. "Of all beings, man is assuredly the one best known; and yet his prosperity or miseries are the product of unknown laws of which only a few isolated and incomplete fragments come into our view. Absolute truth is hidden and perhaps will always remain hidden." I, p. 263.

We again see the imprint of Pascal in this attitude of Tocqueville: "The final step of reason is to recognize that an infinite number of things surpass it. It is weak only if it does not go far enough to know that." Ed. Lafuma, pensée 373.

241. "The great Newton himself resembles an imbecile more by the things that he does not know than he differs from one by the things that he knows." II, p. 715, note f.

242. "I consider this doubt as one of the greatest miseries of our nature; I place it immediately after illnesses and death. But because I have that opinion of it, I do not understand why so many men impose it on themselves without cause and uselessly. That is why I have always considered metaphysics and all purely theoretical sciences, which serve for nothing in the reality of life, as a voluntary torment that man consented to inflict on himself." Letter to Charles Stoffels, 22 October 1831, YTC, BIa1 and *OCB,* VII, pp. 83–84.

> When I began to think, I believed that the world was full of demonstrated truths; that it was only a matter of looking carefully in order to see them. But when I applied myself to considering things, I no longer saw anything except inextricable doubts. [. . .] I ended by convincing myself that the search for absolute, *demonstrable* truth, like the search for perfect happiness, was an effort toward the impossible. Not that there are no such truths that merit the entire conviction of man; but be assured that they are very few in number. For the immense majority of points that are important for us to know, we have only probabilities, only approximations. To despair about this is to despair about being a man; for that is one of the most inflexible laws of our nature.[243]

The creator of an idea, Tocqueville also believes, is always more uncertain of its truth than his disciples. He knows its defects; he knows the elements that can invalidate its existence. But very few men in democratic times can devote their life to the search for great intellectual truths; and if they do so, they are very much required nonetheless to use general ideas to guide their conduct.[244] It follows that the best way to avoid absolute and excessively general ideas is to force each man to occupy himself with ideas, with thinking, with feeling his way, and: "when, tired of looking for what makes his fellows act, he [man] tries hard at least to untangle what pushes himself, he still does not know what to believe. He travels across the entire universe and he doubts. He finally comes back toward himself, and obscurity seems to redouble as he approaches and wants to understand himself."[245]

As this conviction about the absence of absolute, demonstrable truths becomes deeper with Tocqueville, it seems to impose its own logic on the

243. *Ibid.,* pp. 82–83.

244. "So general ideas are only means by the aid of which men advance toward truth, but without ever finding it. You can even say that, to a certain extent, by following this path they are moving away from it." II, p. 728, note c.

245. II, p. 840, note v.

"There is no being in the world that I know less than myself. For me, I am constantly an insoluble problem. I have a very cold head, and a reasoning, even calculating mind; and next to that are found ardent passions that sweep me along without persuading me, mastering my will, while leaving my reason free." Letter to Eugène Stoffels, 18 October 1831, OCB, V, p. 422.

writing of *Democracy:* "You know that I do not take up the pen with the settled intention of following a system and marching at random toward a goal," he observes; "I give myself over to the natural movement of my ideas, allowing myself to be led in good faith from one consequence to another. The result is that, as long as the work is not finished, I do not know exactly where I am going and if I will ever arrive."[246] The rhythm of the book becomes in fact more and more staccato; the brief chapters of the second *Democracy* turn into [*ricordi,* Italian for "souvenirs"; reference to Machiavelli's *Ricordi.*] *thoughts,* almost as if the presentation of a theory without solution required a brief and fragmentary form of writing.

So Tocqueville's philosophic ideal is the man who is feeling his way, who judges himself to be incomplete and makes doubt his natural state, while the democratic ideal is the man who can change everything because he has a blind faith in reason and in the philosophic method.

Regarding himself, the author will note for example:

> I do not need to travel across heaven and earth to find a marvelous subject full of contrast, of grandeur and infinite pettiness, of profound obscurities and singular clarity, capable at the same time of giving birth to piety, admiration, contempt, terror. I have only to consider myself. Man comes out of nothing, passes through time, and goes to disappear forever into the bosom of God. You see him only for a moment wandering at the edge of the two abysses where he gets lost.[247]

Tocqueville does not, however, share the anti-rationalism of conservative theories. What he fears in democracy is not reason, but anti-rationality. Later he will blame the *philosophes* for the same thing: "Truly speaking, some of these *philosophes* adored human reason less than their own reason. Never did anyone show less confidence in common wisdom than those men."[248]

For Tocqueville, in contrast to Guizot, the rise of the middle classes is not the arrival of political reason, but of rational individualism, which in

246. Letter to Mill, 19 November 1836, *OC,* VI, 1, p. 314.

247. II, p. 840.

248. *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 306. We could say that Tocqueville fears that the men of democracies are being transformed into little *philosophes.*

the end equates with the absence of reason. The *philosophes* understood nothing more than the voice of individual reason. As for democratic man, he runs the danger of believing that he is following his own reason when he is only blindly obeying the opinion of the majority.

The best way to avoid excesses in the matter of general ideas, the predominance of thought separated from action, is to force men to enter into practice. That is the advantage of true democracy. It forces each citizen to occupy himself in a practical way with government and moderates the tendency to create the general ideas in politics that equality produces; it provokes uncertainty in this way.

Tocqueville fears in fact that history will pass from the total predominance of action, which is characteristic of barbaric peoples who know only the practice of politics, to the triumph of theory separated from all forms of practice.[249]

But criticism of philosophy is not just a matter of methodology; it does not consist solely of blaming philosophy for a lack of connection with practice. In the drafts of *Democracy* there is a detailed reflection on the birth of general ideas.

For Tocqueville, the attempt of democracies to seek general ideas in the domain of politics arises out of an unwarranted application of the method of Descartes and Bacon to matters for which those methods are not made;

249. And more especially, from a simplistic philosophy characteristic of an intermediate period that wants to explain everything with a single principle and that is embodied as much in the fatalism of the theories of democratic historians as in administrative centralization.

Simplicity of means in politics is a product of human weakness. Tocqueville wants men to be able to combine a large number of means to reach an end. According to him, beauty is not in simplicity of means, but in complexity, which is nothing more than imitating God, who creates with a multiplicity of agents and places "the idea of grandeur and perfection not in executing a great number of things with the help of a single means, but in making a multitude of diverse means contribute to the perfect execution of a single thing." II, p. 740, note d.

"Centralization is not at all the sign of high civilization. It is found neither at the beginning nor at the end of civilization, but in general in the middle." II, p. 799, note e. The idea of unity is appropriate to a middle state. The echo of Pascal and of multiplicity in unity is clear.

the attempt arises out of an extension of the presumption of rationality, foreseeability, and recurrence to matters that do not have these qualities.

That is especially dangerous in the case of equality. The lack of debate about the principle of equality (which is the principle *par excellence* since it comes down to the principle of identity) ends up by imposing a structure in which reason and confrontation are lacking. Aggravated, the individual mind kills reason and its relation to practice, and with it liberty and political confrontation.

The exaltation of individual reason can break the bond between ideology, social condition, and political organization, and lead to the immobility of the social system and ultimately to the end of history. For this reason, far into the second volume and once the foundations of his criticism of democratic thought have been explained, Tocqueville can declare that what he most fears in democracies is not revolutions, but apathy.[250]

When the tendency to create philosophical systems that are separated from practice becomes general, there is also the danger that theory will not find reality adaptable; it will become always more removed from action and more utopian, and will end up by taking the place of political reality; and men, tired of facing the difficulties of action, will take refuge in theory.[251]

In this case, political theory can little by little come to resemble a religion, a doctrine applicable to all individuals and all nations, because it has considered man in an abstract way and has studied his general political rights and duties in all periods and all countries.[252] The dream of reason lives

250. II, p. 1150, note x.

251. This is an idea that has a very important place in the explanation of the importance of intellectuals during the Revolution, but that already appears in *Democracy.* See II, p. 727, note b.

252. The French Revolution created a body of independent ideas that were easy to transmit. Tocqueville observes that "it formed, above all particular nationalities, a common intellectual country in which the men of all nations could become citizens." *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 87. He also asserts that the Revolution was a religious revolution because it developed a corpus of doctrines that, like a religion, can be applied indiscriminately to all men and to all peoples, because it considered man in the abstract, like all religions, and his general political rights and obligations. *Ibid.,* pp. 88ff.

outside of time, and when it coincides with the predominance of equality over liberty, it ends up by enclosing man within the solitude of his own heart:[253] "So each person withdraws narrowly into himself and claims to judge the world from there. . . . Since they [the Americans] see that they manage without help to solve all the small difficulties that their practical life presents, they easily conclude that everything in the world is explicable, and that nothing goes beyond the limits of intelligence."[254]

Democratic man is completely immersed in tasks of a practical type, because democracy takes him away from theory and confines his activities to the economic domain; he no longer believes in anything except his own reason. This tendency, combined with the search for material well-being, takes him away from political activity and predisposes him naturally to accept the opinion of the majority.

Tocqueville notes:

> As citizens become more equal and more similar, the tendency of each blindly to believe a certain man or a certain class decreases. The disposition to believe the mass increases, and more and more it is opinion that leads the world. . . . In times of equality, men, because of their similarity, have no faith in each other, but this very similarity gives them an almost unlimited confidence in the judgment of the public; for it does not seem likely to them that, since all have similar enlightenment, truth is not found on the side of the greatest number. When the man who lives in democratic countries compares himself individually to all those who surround him, he feels with pride that he is equal to each of them; but, when he comes to envisage the ensemble of his fellows and to place himself alongside this great body, he is immediately overwhelmed by his own insignificance and weakness. This same equality that makes him independent of each one of his fellow citizens in particular, delivers him isolated and defenseless to the action of the greatest number.[255]

253. "Thus, not only does democracy make each man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants from him and separates him from his contemporaries; it constantly leads him back toward himself alone and threatens finally to enclose him entirely within the solitude of his own heart." II, p. 884.

254. II, p. 701.

255. II, p. 718.

America, Tocqueville also says, has escaped these problems for the most part, thanks to exceptional circumstances, the intellectual influence of England, and the strength of religion.

The unusual physical conditions of the Americans, which place them in a universe that is malleable and can be transformed at will, often allow them to avoid the intellectual tensions of European societies. An American who is not satisfied with his position can always leave his home and go to the West where he can easily create a new life for himself. That is how an idea easily transforms reality, and why the forces that resist that transformation are weak.

The intellectual influence of England serves to assure the general development of thought. Tocqueville observes that, strictly speaking, the Americans do not have a literature and an intellectual class, but he does not see that condition as necessarily peculiar to democracy. How can a democracy be intellectual if the example of the United States proves the opposite? Because the Americans find their ideas and their books in Europe, just like their philosophy and their religion. They put all of that into practice in the New World. The American intellectual class is found therefore on the other side of the Atlantic. The Americans are only the part of the English population that works on the conquest of America:[256] "I consider the people of the United States as the portion of the English people charged with exploiting the forests of the New World, while the rest of the nation, provided with more leisure and less preoccupied by the material cares of life, is able to devote itself to thought and to develop the human mind in all aspects."[257]

Thus, the United States forms the non-intellectual part of a European people and constitutes a society composed solely of representatives of the middle class. Aristocracy remains on the European shore. In this way Tocqueville connects theory and practice, while avoiding having the Amer-

256. American society depends therefore on the intellectual situation of England. It follows that during its formative years, democracy in the United States does not have the following ingredient necessary for social change: the production of new ideas.

257. II, p. 768. And more particularly of the middle class: "≠America forms like one part of the middle classes of England≠" II, p. 767, note f. Also see II, p. 805, note j.

icans serve as an example of the pernicious effects of democracy that his book announces.[258] The United States certainly does not innovate in philosophy, in literature, or in the aesthetic domain, but this situation is not due to the fact that the Americans belong to a democratic society, writes Tocqueville; the reason is that they devote themselves exclusively to business,[259] or again, that they are showing only the interests and faults of the middle class.

Tocqueville believes, however, in the existence of man's natural taste for things of the mind: "The mind of man left to itself leans from one side toward the limited, the material and the commercial, the useful, from the other it tends without effort toward the infinite, the non-material, the great and the beautiful."[260]

Within the American framework, it is not impossible that an educated and free class will come about, a class that, having the necessary time and money, will be able to devote itself to intellectual work, to encourage and promote literature and the arts.[261]

Religion, the last element peculiar to the American democratic situation, prevents the Americans from falling into the error of trying to apply the principles of rationalist philosophy to matters that are not suited to such principles.[262] For Tocqueville, philosophy is liberty, all that the individual discovers thanks to his own efforts; religion, which covers all that is accepted without discussion, is servitude.[263] Excess of the first leads straight to intellectual individualism and to a state of permanent agitation that opens onto anarchy. Religion, which becomes more and more necessary as philosophy develops, can, by its excessive character, lead to intellectual dogmatism and immobility.

258. Thus, in the case of America, the tension between aristocracy and democracy at the level of general principles also occurs, a mechanism that we will return to. Tocqueville needed England to explain how the American model combines democratic and aristocratic principles.

259. II, pp. 786–87, note p.

260. II, p. 769, note g. We see that here, too, Pascal is not far away.

261. II, p. 772.

262. In the intellectual world, the rivalry between religion and philosophy (authority/liberty) is a variant of the opposition aristocracy/democracy. See II, p. 711, note b.

263. II, p. 724, note s.

But even if that seems paradoxical at first glance, religion, precisely for this reason, is the necessary condition for man to be able to devote himself to practical works.[264]

"For me," declares Tocqueville, "I doubt that man can ever bear complete religious independence and full political liberty at the same time; and I am led to think that, if he does not have faith, he must serve, and, if he is free, he must believe."[265] So if religious beliefs place man in relative servitude, they enclose him in the circle within which he is able to exercise his reason; and, by limiting the action of his mind to the practical circle within which it must function, they force him into action and free his intelligence by reducing his dependence on the general ideas of the majority:[266]

> A religion is a power whose movements are regulated in advance and that moves within a known sphere, and many people believe that within this sphere its effects are beneficial, and that a dogmatic religion better manages to obtain the desirable effects of a religion than one that is rational. The majority is a [illegible word] power that moves in a way haphazardly and can spread successively to everything. Religion is law, the omnipotence of the majority is arbitrariness.[267]

264. "Man needs to believe dogmatically a host of things, were it only to have the time to discuss a few others of them. This authority is principally called *religion* in aristocratic centuries. It will perhaps be named *majority* in democratic centuries, or rather *common opinion.*" III, p. 720, note p.

265. III, p. 745.

266. "During centuries of fervor, men sometimes happen to abandon their religion, but they escape its yoke only to submit to the yoke of another religion. Faith changes objects; it does not die." I, p. 485. Tocqueville fears in this sense that the opinion of the majority will someday become a cult.

267. II, p. 721, note r.

> Religion is an authority (illegible word) to humanity, but manifested by one man or one class of men to all the others, who submit to it. Common opinion is an authority that is not prior to humanity and that is exercised by the generality of men on the individual.
>
> The source of these two authorities is different, but their effects come together. Common opinion, like religion, gives ready made beliefs and relieves man from the unbearable and impossible obligation to decide everything each day by himself. These

In the context of these ideas, Tocqueville asks himself whether Catholicism is the religion that suits democratic times. He is convinced that Catholicism can be proved by the philosophical method of the eighteenth century.[268] But he needs to assure the reader that the multiplication of religions is not going to lessen the importance of religious ideas and of their relation to liberty. Otherwise, it would be impossible for religion to fulfill the limiting role that Tocqueville gives it. That approach produces a difficulty however: religion is accepted rationally, as philosophy, and not as religion; it is not the result of an act of faith. Only the idea, rather unjustified, that solely "minds of the second rank" will apply to religion the principles of the philosophy of Descartes (and this will above all be the case of Protestantism[269]), seems to save Tocqueville from a clear misconception in his explanations.[270]

The intellectual anarchy that you could think is the necessary result of the daily use of the Cartesian method is, on the contrary, more characteristic of periods of revolution than of those in which democracy reigns.[271] Reason, by definition majoritarian, in the end produces characters and opinions that coincide in a certain way.

beliefs were originally discussed, but they are no longer discussed and they penetrate minds by a kind of pressure of all on each (II, p. 720, note p).

268. All the American sects have a core of common ideas. I, p. 473.

269. "I have always believed, you know, that constitutional monarchies would arrive at the republic; and I am persuaded as well that Protestantism will necessarily end up at natural religion." Letter to Ernest de Chabrol, 26 October 1831, YTC, BIa2.

270. Tocqueville speaks of a convention that checks the spirit of innovation at the doors of religion. This idea is the result of a personal reflection, but at the beginning of the second volume he notes: "if you look very closely, you will see that religion itself reigns there much less as revealed doctrine than as common opinion." II, p. 720. Therefore the foundations of religion are not religious, but philosophic, in the sense that the author gives to that word.

"The moral dominion of the majority is perhaps called to replace religions to a certain point or to perpetuate certain ones of them, if it protects them. But then religion would live more like common opinion than like religion. Its strength would be more borrowed than its own." *Ibid.,* note p.

271. II, p. 708, note t.

Here Tocqueville seems to find in democracy a reason for optimism that does not well fit the aristocratic vision that is sometimes imputed to him. In order for the intellectual anarchy that he believes is revolutionary to disappear, the majority of citizens must exercise their reason. But the author himself recognizes that the power that directs the mass will always be aristocratic because, as he says repeatedly, it is impossible for all men to have the time and leisure necessary to occupy themselves with works of the mind.

This way of seeing allows Tocqueville to avoid the eclecticism of Cousin. Eclecticism is the government of the middle class introduced to philosophy. The ideas of Tocqueville do not combine well with this philosophy of the *juste milieu.* But if Tocqueville's aristocratic nature pushes him to reject philosophic eclecticism, it does not prevent him from constructing a philosophy of the *middle* (*milieu*) that is his own. He places this principle of "life in the middle" between the two excesses of reason that in his view are represented by Heliogabalus and Saint Jerome.[272]

Here it was a matter of restoring man to history and society; now it is going to be a matter of restoring him to reason.

The Reign of Total Reason

In democracies, equality reaches and penetrates every aspect of life.[273] Equality of minds, equality of conditions and sovereignty of the people

272. See II, p. 960, note k, and p. 1281, note e.

273. When Tocqueville speaks about the existence of equality in America, he means the sentiment of not being inferior to anyone and not the equal division of wealth or power. In an interesting commentary on American equality, placed in travel notebook E and from which we can quote only an extract, he explains this difference: "Men, in America as with us, are ranked according to certain categories in the course of social life; common habits, education and, above all, wealth establishes these classifications; but these rules are neither absolute, nor inflexible, nor permanent. They establish temporary distinctions and do not form classes strictly speaking; they give no superiority, even of opinion, to one man over another." YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage* (*OC,* V, 1), p. 280.

The explanation of the sentiment of equality that Beaumont gives in a note in *Marie* (I, pp. 383–90) seems equally clear on this point. But certain historians have seen in Tocqueville the model of an egalitarian society. See particularly Edward Pessen, *Jack-*

are its three constituent elements. But the reign of total reason, in which tyranny of public opinion, the pursuit of well-being, and political apathy combine and toward which the democratic regime seems to go, does not cease to frighten Tocqueville.

That is because what emerges there is a world without society, an individual without individuality, an omnipotent state that separates citizens from each other and that promotes the absence of shared ideas and sentiments;[274] in other words, a new form of despotism that, if it still lacks a name, has all the characteristics of a new state of nature.[275]

In this new despotism, society disappears and loses its power as a creator of change and protective filter of state action. The individual finds himself isolated in the face of the action of the political power that, as the expression of the social state, is also his master and his guardian. This political power, by destroying every center of resistance, finishes by coinciding with society and occupying its place,[276] until we are confronted only by either the isolated individual or individuals as an entire group: "In democracy you see only *yourself* and *all.*"[277]

This despotism is not a type of government with its own form, as Montesquieu thought. For Tocqueville, it is the negation of all political and social forms. In this, the author recognizes his debt to Rous-

sonian America: Society, Personality, and Politics (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1969); "The Egalitarian Myth and the American Social Reality: Wealth, Mobility and Equality in the 'Era of the Common Man,'" *American Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (1971): 898-1034; and "Tocqueville's Misreading of America, America's Misreading of Tocqueville," *Tocqueville Review* 4, no. 1 (1982): 5–22; Irving M. Zeitlin, *Liberty, Equality and Revolution in Alexis de Tocqueville* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), 57–62.

274. "Sentiments and ideas are renewed, the heart grows larger and the human mind develops only by the reciprocal action of men on each other." II, p. 900.

275. Referring to Hobbes, Tocqueville wonders: "what is a gathering of rational and intelligent beings bound together only by force?" I, p. 389.

276. "Despotism would not only destroy liberty among these people, but in a way society." II, p. 889, note f.

277. II, p. 718, note m. Here we see Rousseau's man divided between himself and society.

seau[278] and diverges from the main current of classical liberalism by putting historical linearity in doubt. The state of nature is found as much in a final phase of history as in a pre-historic moment; it is at once pre- and post-social.

But this new condition that we have compared to the state of nature is different from the latter in an important way. By recognizing only the capacities of individual reason alone, man falls into individualistic rationalism; but at the same time, he has total confidence in common opinion, because he is pushed by the need for dogmatism that is inherent in his existence:[279] "Faith in common opinion is the faith of democratic nations. The majority is the prophet; you believe it without reasoning. You follow it confidently without discussion. It exerts an immense pressure on individual intelligence."[280]

278. Here [in despotism] is the final outcome of inequality, and the extreme point that closes the circle and touches our starting point. This is where all individuals again become equal, because they are nothing, and where, since the subjects have no other rule than the will of the master and the master has no other rule than his passions, the notions of good and the principles of justice disappear yet again. Everything here leads to the law of the strongest alone and consequently to a new state of nature different from the one where we began; the first was the state of nature in its purity, and the second is the fruit of an excess of corruption. Yet there is so little difference between these two states, and the contract of government is so dissolved by despotism, that the despot is the master only as long as he is the strongest; and as soon as the despot can be driven out, he has no grounds to protest against violence. The riot that ends by strangling or dethroning a sultan is an act as lawful as those by which the day before he disposed of the lives and goods of his subjects. Force alone maintained him; force alone overthrows him.

J.-J. Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité,* in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1964), III, p. 191. See below, I, p. 231, note z.

279. If man was forced to prove to himself all the truths that he uses every day, he would never finish doing so; he would wear himself out with preliminary demonstrations without advancing; as he has neither the time, because of the short span of his life, nor the ability, because of the limitations of his mind, to act in this way, he is reduced to holding as certain a host of facts and opinions that he has had neither the leisure nor the power to examine and to verify for himself, but that those more clever have found or that the crowd adopts. On this foundation he builds himself the structure of his own thoughts. It is not his will that leads him to proceed in this manner; the inflexible law of his condition compels him to do so. II, p. 714.

280. II, p. 720, note p.

The common sense of the democrat operates in the narrow field in which he has some knowledge and where he is able to put that knowledge into practice. But, in the areas where men are not involved, they accept general ideas that they have not thought of themselves; and in this way, the world, except for the narrow field in which each man is enclosed, "ends up being an insoluble problem for the man who clings to the most tangible objects and who ends up lying down on his stomach against the earth out of fear that he, in turn, may come to miss the ground."[281]

Democratic despotism is therefore the exaltation of the individual and of society. It is a double state of nature in which men enter into relation with each other almost exclusively through the mathematical power of interests and through the most faithful expression of that power, which is money; in this double state of nature, society imposes its opinions on its members with a completely unheard of force.

From another perspective, the logic of reason invades the heart of man, eliminating many of his passions and modifying certain of his sentiments, transforming for example his egoism into individualism,[282] or his generosity into interest well understood. The State, for its part, by making use of the first rational principle, which is that of unity—the expression of the principle of identity that is contained in the idea of equality—and that of centralization, imposes its forms and opinions with a speed and effectiveness previously unknown.

Democratic despotism thus takes men away from political practice by leading them exclusively toward the pursuit of material well-being, which tends to separate them more and more from each other.[283] In the

281. II, p. 1370.

282. "Egoism, vice of the heart. Individualism, of the mind." II, p. 882, note d.

283. Tocqueville learned from Guizot that the barbarians of the IVth century acted in the same way: "It is not by exterminating the civilized men of the IVth century that the barbarians managed to destroy the civilization of that time. It was enough for them to come between them so to speak and by separating them to make them like strangers to one another." II, p. 896, note c.

"There is a society only when men consider a great number of objects in the same way; when they have the same opinions on a great number of subjects; when, finally, the same facts give rise among them to the same impressions and the same thoughts." I, p. 598. Also see note y on the same page.

end, "men are no longer tied together except by interests and not by ideas."[284]

By separating man from his fellows, this new form of despotism brings about a clear break in the flow of the ideas and opinions that nourish society and history. For "the circulation of ideas is to civilization what the circulation of blood is to the human body";[285] and despotism, by interrupting this movement, creates a society that is no longer composed of anything except solitary social molecules.

"In a society of barbarians equal to each other," recalls Tocqueville, "since the attention of each man is equally absorbed by the first needs and the most coarse interests of life, the idea of intellectual progress can come to the mind of any one of them only with difficulty."[286]

The old despotism was realistic. Facts were its foundation, and it made use of them. It oppressed the body, but the soul escaped its tyrannical enterprise. The new despotism has the perfidious principle of leaving the body free and oppressing the soul.[287] While the legal and political tyranny of the majority is the modern version of the old despotism, the new despotism is the mental and social tyranny of the majority, which affects the social state, habits, and mores. Thus the damage caused by the tyranny of opinion is much greater, because this new type of despotism touches on the sources of the movement of history and society, as well as on what is most proper to the individual.

284. II, pp. 708–9.

"Don't you see, on all sides, beliefs giving way to reasoning, and sentiments, to calculation?" I, p. 391.

There is, however, a profound change from one *Democracy* to the other relating to one passion, that of well-being. If Tocqueville asserts in 1835 that "there, ambition for power is replaced by the love of well-being, a more vulgar, but less dangerous passion" (I, p. 943), he will reveal all of its malignity in the 1840 part.

285. II, p. 886, note c.

286. II, p. 878, note g.

287. The new despotism has the same relation to the old as the slavery of antiquity has to the enslavement of American Blacks. The Americans of the South "have, if I may express myself in this way, spiritualized despotism and violence." I, p. 579. Ancient slavery bound the body and left the mind free; modern slavery prevents instruction and controls the mind. Thus the enormous importance of liberty of the press in democracies. See I, pp. 290–94, and II, p. 908.

In the end man could end up by no longer belonging to anything except a quasi-society of barbarians equal to each other, thus closing the cycle of history with a despotic regime that has become permanent.

Tyranny of the majority, the tyranny of the electoral voice described in the first *Democracy,* is already the triumph of individualism, that is to say the triumph of man without individuality and personality.[288] The moment of election forces the abandonment of what is specific and particular to the individual and forces him for a moment to become a unit, or, if you want, an abstraction (one man = one voice). In this way, the new form of despotism is entirely compatible with election. Men emerge from servitude to elect their tyrants and return there immediately after.[289]

In 1840, Tocqueville combines with the practical and legal tyranny of the majority the spiritual and intellectual oppression of the opinion of all, which leads in the last resort to a situation of permanent immobility and unity. If, as he remarks, "sentiments and ideas are renewed, the heart grows larger and the human mind develops only by the reciprocal action of men on each other,"[290] then common action and vitality will disappear in democracies:

> Do you not see that opinions are dividing more quickly than patrimonies, that each man is enclosing himself narrowly within his own mind, like the farm laborer in his field? . . . That sentiments become more individual each day, and that soon men will be more separated by their beliefs than they have ever been by inequality of conditions?[291]

288. By saying that tyranny of the majority is the equivalent of the state of nature, Tocqueville also repeats Madison. I, p. 425.

289. This explains why readers have been able to find in Tocqueville a critique of communist totalitarianism as well as mass society. The interest in Tocqueville's work owes a great deal to the fact that democratic despotism is more social than political, and is, in large measure, independent of the political form. The distinction between the social and the political is, however, debatable and not very clear, even if we cannot blame Tocqueville for a lack of clarity concerning a dichotomy that we are not able to express more clearly at the present time.

290. II, p. 900.

291. II, p. 1272, note t.

The inhabitant of America is forced, like every inhabitant of a new country, to acquire rapidly the habit of governing himself,[292] but this habit must be prevented from being pushed beyond its natural limits and thereby taking the form of servitude:

> Will I dare to say it amid the ruins that surround me? What I dread most for the generations to come is not revolutions.
>
> If citizens continue to enclose themselves more and more narrowly within the circle of small domestic interests and to be agitated there without respite, you can fear that they will end by becoming as if impervious to these great and powerful public emotions that disturb peoples, but which develop and renew them. When I see property become so mobile, and the love of property so anxious and so ardent, I cannot prevent myself from fearing that men will reach the point of regarding every new theory as a danger, every innovation as an unfortunate trouble, every social progress as a first step toward a revolution, and that they will refuse entirely to move for fear that they would be carried away. I tremble, I confess, that they will finally allow themselves to be possessed so well by a cowardly love of present enjoyments, that the interest in their own future and that of their descendants will disappear, and that they will prefer to follow feebly the course of their destiny, than to make, if needed, a sudden and energetic effort to redress it.
>
> You believe that the new societies are going to change face every day, and as for me, I fear that they will end by being too invariably fixed in the same institutions, the same prejudices, the same mores; so that humanity comes to a stop and becomes limited; that the mind eternally turns back on itself without producing new ideas, that man becomes exhausted in small solitary and sterile movements, and that, even while constantly moving, humanity no longer advances.[293]

Revolutions disrupt the activities of society; they suddenly make movement and social changes easy and unpredictable; finally they destroy personal wealth. It seems then that only the poor, who have nothing to lose, can court a revolution. Democracies seek the opposite, since they need a tranquil and peaceful atmosphere in which their members can concentrate

292. I, p. 650, note l.
293. II, p. 1151.

all their activity on the pursuit of their individual well-being and that of their family.[294]

In democracies, Tocqueville notes,

> since men are no longer attached to each other by any bond of castes, classes, corporations, families, they are only too inclined to become preoccupied solely with their particular interests, and are always too ready to consider only themselves and to withdraw into a narrow individualism in which every public virtue is suffocated. Despotism, far from struggling against this tendency, makes it irresistible, because despotism removes from citizens every common passion, every natural need, every need to cooperate, every occasion to act together; it walls them, so to speak, within private life. They already tended to separate themselves; it isolates them; they grew cold toward one another; it turns them into ice.[295]

So democratic despotism finishes by producing the greatest stability in society, but this stability is not desirable because it announces the immobility of death.

> Equality of conditions, giving individual reason a complete independence, must lead men toward intellectual anarchy and bring about continual revolutions in human opinions.
>
> This is the first idea that presents itself, the common idea, the most likely idea at first view.
>
> By examining things more closely, I discover that there are limits to this individual independence in democratic countries that I had not seen at first and which make me believe that beliefs must be more *common* and more *stable* than we judge at first glance.
>
> That is already doing a great deal to lead the mind of the reader there.
>
> But I want to aim still further and I am going even as far as imagining that the final result of democracy will be to make the human mind too immobile and human opinions too stable.

294. "Great revolutions are not more common among democratic peoples than among other peoples; I am even led to believe that they are less so. But within these nations there reigns a small uncomfortable movement, a sort of incessant rotation of men that troubles and distracts the mind without enlivening or elevating it." II, p. 780.

295. *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 74.

> This ideas is so extraordinary and so removed from the mind of the reader that I must make him see it only in the background and as an hypothesis.[296]

Tocqueville clearly perceives the radical nature of such an idea and notes in a draft:

> This idea that the democratic social state is anti-revolutionary so shocks accepted ideas that I must win over the mind of the reader little by little, and for that I must begin by saying that this social state is less *revolutionary* than is supposed. I begin there and by an imperceptible curve I arrive at saying that there is room to fear that it is not revolutionary enough. True idea, but which would seem paradoxical at first view.[297]

With this last turn, Tocqueville's thought has for its part completed its own revolution.

Dialectic of Ideas

If democratic apathy can be worse than revolutionary disorders, then the political problem abruptly changes aspect. It becomes necessary to reintroduce into society change, the circulation of ideas, intellectual movement, which does not mean revolution. It is in fact no less necessary to try to avoid revolutions, even if, in Tocqueville's eyes, temporary anarchy is preferable to permanent order.[298]

The author distinguishes between legislative instability, which concerns secondary laws, and the instability that affects the foundations of the constitution. The latter produces revolutions and causes breaks in society;[299] the former, on the other hand, is the sign of intellectual vitality. So how is

296. IV, p. 1144, note q.
297. *Ibid.*
298. See IV, p. 1191, note b.
299. II, pp. 424–26.
"The small shake-ups that public liberty imparts constantly to the most settled societies recall everyday the possibility of reversals and keep public prudence awake." *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 197. In this way, small revolutions prevent great ones.

it possible to create this first type of instability while avoiding the second? How can we bring about the circulation of ideas and sentiments that are debated and shared at the same time?

To invite men to communicate, to see each other, to exchange ideas, such is the main task of political philosophy: "So the great object of law-makers in democracies must be to create common *affairs* that *force* men to enter into contact with each other. . . . For what is society for thinking beings, if not the communication and connection of minds and hearts?"[300]

The struggle between opposing principles produces heat and the movement of ideas. It sometimes produces disorder, but it assures the circulation of the ideas and sentiments that nourish society.

Tocqueville wrote to Kergorlay:

> I compare man in this world to a traveler who is walking constantly toward an increasingly cold region and who is forced to move more as he advances. The great sickness of the soul is cold. And to combat this fearful evil, he must not only maintain the lively movement of his mind by work, but also maintain contact with his fellows and with the business of this world. Above all at this time, we are no longer allowed to live on what has already been acquired, but must try hard to continue to acquire and not rest upon ideas that would soon enshroud us as if we were asleep in the grave. But we must constantly put into contact and into conflict the ideas that we adopt and those we do not, the ideas that we had in our youth and those suggested by the state of society and the opinions of the period that has arrived.[301]

This movement and confrontation of ideas is at risk of drowning in apathy, individualism, and the obsession with well-being, first results of democracy.

300. III, p. 891, note k.

301. Letter to Kergorlay, 3 February 1857, *OC,* XIII, 2, p. 325.

During the last years of his life, when he was working on *Ancien Régime,* Tocqueville wrote: "I am more and more attached to my lands and my great fields, to my ocean above all, and to its serious beaches, and I feel that only there do I live happily. But even there, to be happy, some great occupation must animate my mind, and only through ideas do I see, so to speak, the physical beauties that surround me." Letter to Freslon [?], 8 October 1856, YTC, DIIIa.

The "democratic monster" that occupies so many pages of *Democracy* is the one that has made only half a revolution, that has forgotten the principle of liberty, and that has been entirely captivated by the rational character of the abstract principle of equality.[302] This democratic monster produces a political philosophy based precisely upon the social, material, and political conditions that work to promote and to ensure the existence of such a philosophy, but it does not offer the possibility of denying such a philosophy, that is to say, by political practice.

So Tocqueville aspires, in a certain way, to completing the French Revolution, to finishing it, without forgetting that fraternity is the fruit of liberty and equality, as well as of a constant tension between the two, as had been the case in 1789.

Tocqueville remarks in the *Ancien Régime:*

> It is 89, time of inexperience, undoubtedly, but of generosity, enthusiasm, virility and grandeur, time of immortal memory, toward which the view of men will turn with admiration and respect, when those who saw it and we ourselves will have long disappeared. Then the French were proud enough of their cause and of themselves to believe that they could be equal in liberty. So everywhere in the middle of democratic institutions, they placed free institutions.[303]

For the exceptional moment represented by 1789, a momentary and magnificent combination of liberty with equality, Tocqueville shows and seems to have shown all his life a quasi-religious respect, a sort of faith never denied. In this regard, Sainte-Beuve shares with Beaumont the following anecdote:

> I have always had great difficulty speaking about Tocqueville, you will have noticed it yourself; not that I do not place him very much apart and very high, but because he did not, in my opinion, completely fulfill the whole

302. See IV, p. 1209. See *Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with Nassau William Senior from 1834 to 1859,* edited by M. C. M. Simpson (London: H. S. King, 1872), II, pp. 92–94.

303. *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 247.

"Democracy is liberty combined with equality." Roland-Pierre Marcel, *Essai politique sur Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 168.

> idea that his friends are allowed to have and to give of him. And then, there was always between him and me, from the beginning and long before the most recent events, a certain kernel of separation; he was of a believing nature, that is to say that, even in the realm of ideas, he had a certain religion, a certain faith. One day, at a dinner at Madame Récamier's, I saw him not being pleased with a joke about something concerning 89. I took good note of it. That form of mind impressed me, I admit, more than it attracted me, and despite friendly advances, I always remained with him on a footing more of respect than of friendship.[304]

History, according to Tocqueville, is defined as a struggle between the abstract and the concrete; thus the opposition between liberty and equality. The objective of political science is consequently to maintain these two existing principles in constant tension in such a way that no monopoly exists of equality over liberty, which would lead to despotism, and that equality does not run the risk of being carried away into anarchy by the excesses of liberty. In this sense, it is a matter of prolonging 1789.

For Tocqueville, liberty is a passion,[305] changing and impossible to define.[306] It belongs to the *order of the heart.* Equality, to use Pascal's distinction, reigns in the *order of the mind.*

When he writes to John Stuart Mill, "I love liberty by taste, equality by instinct and by reason,"[307] Tocqueville is only expressing in another way the principal elements of his thought. The taste for equality is always of a rational, mental nature. Liberty, in contrast, is a passion, a sentiment.[308]

304. Letter to Beaumont, 26 November 1865. With the kind permission of the Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Spoelberch de Lovenjoul.

305. "Only liberty is able to suggest to us those powerful common emotions that carry and sustain souls above themselves; it alone can throw variety into the midst of the uniformity of our conditions and the monotony of our mores; it alone can distract our minds from small thoughts and elevate the goal of our desires." *Discours de réception* at the *Académie française. OCB,* IX, p. 20.

306. "Do not ask me to analyze this sublime taste; it must be experienced." *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, p. 217.

307. Letter to John Stuart Mill, June 1835 (*Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, p. 293). Also see *Voyages en Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie, OC,* V, 2, p. 91.

308. "For democratic institutions I have a taste from the head, but I am aristocratic by instinct." Quoted by Antoine Rédier, *Comme disait Monsieur de Tocqueville,* p. 48.

Liberty is an individual, particular sentiment, impossible to communicate; it represents the human because it is indefinable, incomplete, always in process, always being defined, by wagering, risking, making mistakes, and beginning again. Liberty must be lived as you live your life, never ceasing to invent. Authentic democracy is the equal participation of citizens in the definition of liberty, a definition that is always complicated, disorderly, and risky. God marks out the road toward equality, but liberty is a path that man opens and that crosses always different countries.

Equality is abstract, rational, always identical to itself; it is deductive, while liberty is inductive, as within reach and clear as liberty is complicated and fleeting.

The despotic democratic regime produces an unbearable and unlimited predominance of the mind over the heart, of equality over liberty. Liberty then disappears in the face of what can be defined and what is definite, in the face of equality; the principle of equality is allowed to reign alone. That is what philosophy must avoid at all cost. That is also what constitutes the ultimate objective of *Democracy,* as Tocqueville notes in a draft: "Danger of allowing a single social principle to take without objection the absolute direction of society. General idea that I wanted to emerge from this work."[309]

If, in the plan of history, the principle of liberty must be introduced as a counterbalance to that of equality, in the political world strictly speaking[310] the struggle of ideas takes place between two great universal principles that, for Tocqueville, are called democracy and aristocracy;[311] the one

309. III, p. 740, note d.

"Do not adopt one social principle *alone* however good it seems. Do not use one form of government *alone.* Stay away from unity." IV, p. 1266, note j.

In the same way, Tocqueville claims that views expressed in the French parliamentary debates have become less elevated since the victory of the liberal party and the disappearance of the opposition. II, p. 284, note c.

310. If men create laws, women create mores. A good reader of Rousseau, Tocqueville claims therefore that in America the women are superior to the men (for mores create laws). See II, p. 482, note u. Woman represents the indefinite, liberty, passions, while man represents equality, the defined, the rational.

311. The democratic social state and the aristocratic social state appear with very defined features in the letter of 1830 to Charles Stoffels. The text will be found in appendix V.

seeks to concentrate public power, the other to scatter it.[312] Once the sentiment of liberty has disappeared or is in serious danger of doing so, Tocqueville is forced to imagine institutions that can produce the conditions necessary for liberty to exist; the hope is that they will give rise to the sentiment and passion that are otherwise in danger of disappearing. In the future, liberty, according to him, will be a product of political art. Thus, if the social state moves men away from each other, the political state must unite them;[313] if society destroys the passions and tends no longer to promote anything except interest, the political state must work to maintain passions[314] and to turn away from economic well-being.[315]

312. II, p. 286.

> I find that, with rare sagacity, you have indicated the conditions under which great parties, well disciplined, can exist in a free country. As you say, each of them must be the representative of one of the two great principles that eternally divide human societies, and that, to be brief, can be designated by the names aristocracy and democracy (II, p. 281, note a).

313. "The social state separates men, the political state must draw them closer./ The social state gives them the taste for well-being [v: inclines them toward the earth], the political state must raise them up by giving them great ideas and great emotions" IV, p. 1262, note b.

314. In a letter to Corcelle of 19 October 1839 (*OC,* XI, 1, p. 139), Tocqueville asks: "So will we never see the wind of true political passions rise again, my dear Corcelle, those violent, hard, sometimes cruel, but great, disinterested, fruitful passions; those passions that are the soul of the only parties that I understand and to which I would feel myself willingly disposed to give my time, my fortune and my life?" Also see the speech on the question of the right to work (*OCB,* IX, p. 542).

315. There are many examples of opposition. Political liberty, we have said, implies religious beliefs:

> In the moral world, therefore, everything is classified, coordinated, foreseen, decided in advance. In the political world, everything is agitated, contested, uncertain; in the one, passive though voluntary obedience; in the other, independence, scorn for experience and jealousy of all authority. Far from harming each other, these two tendencies, apparently so opposed, move in harmony and seem to offer mutual support (I, p. 70. Also see note in the same place).

Tocqueville wants to develop the sciences in aristocratic societies and the moral sciences in democracies, in order, in both cases, to counter the tendencies of the social state (III, p. 962, note n) and he wishes to promote spiritualism to stop democratic materialism:

The opposition of the social power to the force of the state, the opposition of society to the political power must also exist. For Tocqueville, as we know, the ideal instrument for achieving this situation is associations,[316] organizations of an aristocratic character that oppose the omnipotence of the majority that characterizes democracy.

Tocqueville's ideal is not the mixed regime, however. A predominating principle will always exist because men will always try to order society and the state according to the same principle.[317] Nonetheless, in order to avoid falling into despotism and omnipotence, that is to say, into the ultimate tyranny of equality (one = one), the opposite principle must always exist.

The classical mechanisms of liberalism, such as the separation of powers, the idea of rights, liberty of the press, and federalism, serve Tocqueville only to the degree that they can be used to that end.

The author of *Democracy* wants democracies to oppose a strong legislative power with a power elected for a longer period (or put in place in a permanent way, as in monarchy); this recalls the mechanism of balance and counterbalance inspired by Montesquieu. But Tocqueville demands that, within each power, concentration be balanced by an action of dispersal. If

If I had been born in the Middle Ages, I would have been the enemy of superstitions, for then the social movement led there.

But today, I feel indulgent toward all the follies that spiritualism can suggest.

The great enemy is materialism, not only because it is in itself a detestable doctrine, but also because it is unfortunately in accord with the social tendency (III, p. 956, note d).

316. "Sentiments and ideas are renewed, the heart grows larger and the human mind develops only by the reciprocal action of men on each other. I have demonstrated that this action is almost nil in democratic countries. So it must be created there artificially. And this is what associations alone are able to do." III, p. 900.

317. Four types of regimes (that can be despotic or free) exist: 1. Democratic social state (social equality) and democratic political state (political equality): democracy. 2. Democratic social state combined with an aristocratic political state. This regime tends toward and will arrive at democracy, for the political state finishes by being the reflection of the social state. 3. Social inequality and political equality (this is, according to Tocqueville, a chimera). 4. Social inequality and political inequality: aristocracy.

the first chamber is elected by universal suffrage, the second must be formed by indirect election. If the political power must be centralized, the administration must be decentralized to the same degree. The jury does wonders for the education of the people, but it must be guided by the judge's hand. The excesses of the majority, a constant danger in democracies, are opposed by the creation of an aristocracy of associations. And in the same way, against the associations of owners, there are the associations of workers; against the state, the society, etc.

The examples of opposition multiply throughout the book and extend from the purely political field to all aspects of intellectual life. "The most favorable moment for the development of the sciences, of literature and of the arts," Tocqueville specifies in this regard, "is when democracy begins to burst into the midst of an aristocratic society. Then you have movement amid order. Then humanity moves very rapidly, but like an army in battle, without breaking ranks and without discipline losing anything to ardor."[318]

The author of *Democracy* found this idea in Montesquieu;[319] the idea of the opposition of the three powers ends up by amounting to the opposition between the legislative power and the executive power, which in Tocqueville is the confrontation between democracy and aristocracy.[320] Nonetheless, the problem for Montesquieu, like that for all of political philosophy before him, was purely political despotism, while Tocqueville

318. III, p. 810, note q.

> The sixteenth century had formed many of those fine, proud and free minds whose race was entirely lost in the theatrical splendor of the following century. Also you must have noted the superiority of the writers of the first period of the reign of Louis XIV over those of the second. The first were formed in that very short time in which feudal independence was allied for a moment with modern art and taste; the one gave grandeur, and the others the finish of details and the harmony of the whole (YTC, CIb (thoughts collected by Mary Mottley). See IV, p. 1146, note l, in which the same idea is found again.)

319. As Luis Díez del Corral pointed out, Tocqueville could have had this idea from the very mouth of Guizot (*El pensamiento político de Tocqueville,* pp. 285–86, 315, 377–79). But differing from Guizot, Tocqueville does not believe that the result of the struggle between the forces of society and those of the individual is the bourgeois mentality.

320. Book XI, chapter VI of *Esprit des lois.* Also see book I, chapter 2.

points out for the first time a new form of tyranny that does not have a name, but that spreads from the political power to ideas, habits and thoughts, invading all of private and public life.[321]

There are no recipes or definitive solutions; no formula allows us to go beyond this system of opposition. The terms are in continual tension, changeable and alive. Tocqueville advances in this way between two abysses with the talent of a Malesherbes or of a Royer-Collard,[322] by adopting what is best in each condition, by maintaining a precarious equilibrium, by going along in doubt and uncertainty.

* * * * *

The objective of political philosophy is to produce among the citizens those passions that can destroy or save society, to produce that dialectic of ideas, of the abstract and the concrete, of liberty and equality, of reason and of passion, that causes small, continual revolutions.[323]

According to Tocqueville, liberty certainly cannot be defined in a negative way by obedience to laws that are the result of the compromises and struggles of two permanent and equally strong parties. The author of *Democracy* lives in a world in which one of the two powers can disappear completely and in which the best laws are capable of coexisting with a social condition similar to that of the state of nature, in which legal liberty can go hand in hand with political and intellectual despotism.

For Tocqueville, man is above all a participant in history. He is part of a vast project that he himself must work on each day. The pilot of a boat, even if he does not determine either the winds or the waves, can hoist or lower the sails; he guides his ship. He is a man who looks at the past and the future, but who cannot learn very much from history.

321. This sets him apart from Rousseau. See I, p. 406, note g, pp. 407 and 413.

322. See Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville,* pp. 158–59, and *OCB,* VI, p. 445.

323. "As I grow older, I have more regard, I will almost say respect, for the passions. I love them when they are good, and I am not even sure about detesting them when they are bad. They are power, and power, wherever it is found, appears at its best amid the universal weakness that surrounds us." Letter to Ampère, 10 August 1841, *OC,* XI, p. 152. Also see *OCB,* VI, p. 407.

The past does not offer rules of conduct or solutions for the present; it gives sentiments, but not reasons; it creates passions and faith, but not laws; it develops tendencies, it calls for prudence, but does not offer judgments.

Nor does the history of peoples offer solutions for the present, just as *Democracy in America* does not claim to give to the French or to Europeans a theory of democracy. It is not a matter of imitating America, Tocqueville says in substance; it is a matter of understanding America. For the rest, the destiny of man is still, and is forever, in his own hands.

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VOLUME I
(1835)

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA[a]

a. The drafts contain the following note, probably meant to announce the publication of the book:

> Explanatory note about my position and the principal ideas that form the heart of the work./
>
> In 1831, Messrs. Beaumont and Tocqueville received a mission from the French government for the purpose of going to the United States to study the penitentiary system there. They remained nearly one year in the United States. After returning in 1832, they published a work entitled: *Of the Penitentiary System in the United States and Its Application to France.* Since then, this work has been translated in its entirety in the United States and in Germany; a portion has been translated in England. The French Academy believed that its authors should be awarded the annual grand prize established for whoever publishes the most useful book.
>
> M. de Tocqueville, one of the authors of the book mentioned above, is about to publish this coming October a work in two volumes that also has America as the subject. This book will be entitled *Of the Dominion of Democracy in America.*
>
> The fact that most struck the author during his stay in the United States was the fact of equality of conditions. He believed that this primary fact had exercised and still exercised a prodigious influence on the laws, habits, mores of the Americans and dominated, so to speak, civil and political society in the United States. This struck him even more because this same fact of equality of conditions is constantly developing among all the peoples of Europe in a progressive manner.
>
> So M. de Tocqueville thought that if someone could succeed in specifying in a very plain and very clear fashion what type of influence this fact, established in America and half-established in Europe, really exercised on society, what necessary aspect it gave to laws, what secret instincts to peoples, what cast it imparted to ideas and mores, a work not only interesting, but also useful would be written; a work, though serious in form, would nonetheless reach the minds of the greatest number of readers, because it would in some place necessarily touch on the political passions of the period and all the material interests that the political passions more or less express.
>
> The result of these reflections has been the work that M. de Tocqueville is about to publish today and for which he gathered an enormous quantity of materials during his stay in America (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 100–101, 99).

PART I

Introduction[a]

[The work that you are about to read is not a travelogue,[b] <the reader can rest easy>. I do not want him to be concerned with me. You will also not find in this book a complete summary of all the institutions of the United States; but I flatter myself that, in it, the public will find some new documentation and, from it, will gain useful knowledge about a subject that is

a. Ideas of the preface./

Irresistible movement of democracy, great fact of the modern world. Importance of this fact superior to all questions of time and of internal politics. America showing this fact come to its completion.

Goal of this work to give accurate notions about this fact; moreover, I do not judge this fact. I do not even believe that there is anything of an absolute goodness in institutions. Montesquieu . . .

Ease of criticizing me. I know that nothing will be easier than to criticize this book, if anyone ever thinks of examining it critically. You will have only to contrast certain particular facts to certain of my general ideas. Nothing is easier; there are facts and arguments for all doctrines. For you to judge me, I would like you to want to do what I did, to see an ensemble of facts and to come to a decision based on the mass of reasons. To whoever will do that and then does not agree with me, I am ready to submit. For if I am sure of having sincerely sought the truth, I am far from considering myself as certain to have found it.

To contrast an isolated fact to the ensemble of facts, a detached idea to the sequence of ideas.

It isn't that I don't have set ideas, but they are general (for there is absolute truth only in general ideas). I believe that tyranny is the greatest evil, liberty the first good. But as for knowing what is most appropriate for preventing the one and creating the other among peoples and knowing if all peoples are made to escape tyranny, that is where doubt begins (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 96–97).

b. The criticism of this passage (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 7) made by Louis de Kergorlay has been published in *Correspondance avec Kergorlay* (*OC,* XIII, 1, p. 367).

more important for us than the fate of America and no less worthy of holding our attention.[c]]

Among the new objects that attracted my attention during my stay in the United States, none struck me more vividly than the equality of conditions.[d] I discovered without difficulty the prodigious influence that this primary fact exercises on the march of society; it gives a certain direction to the public mind, a certain turn to the laws; to those governing, new maxims, and particular habits to the governed.

Soon I recognized that this same fact extends its influence far beyond political mores and laws, and that it has no less dominion over civil society, than over government: it creates opinions, gives birth to sentiments, suggests customs and modifies all that it does not produce.

Therefore, as I studied American society, I saw more and more, in equality of conditions, the generating fact from which each particular fact seemed to derive, and I rediscovered it constantly before me as a central point where all of my observations came together.

Then I turned my thought back toward our hemisphere, and it seemed to me that I perceived something analogous to the spectacle that the New World offered me. I saw equality of conditions that, without having reached its extreme limits as in the United States, approached those limits

c. In a first version of the drafts:

[In the margin: I have not said everything that I saw, but I have said everything that I believed at the same time true and useful [v: profitable] to make known, and without wanting to write a treatise on America, I thought only to help my fellow citizens resolve a question that must interest us more deeply.]

I see around me facts without number, but I notice one of them that dominates all the others; it is old; it is stronger than laws, more powerful than men; it seems to be a direct product of the divine will; it is the gradual development of democracy in the Christian world. When I say "democracy" here I do not mean to speak only about a political form of government, but of a social state (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 115–16).

d. This first paragraph differs a bit from the manuscript: "There is a fact that more than all the rest attracts the attention of the European upon his arrival on the shores of the New World. A surprising equality reigns there among fortunes; at first glance minds themselves seem equal. I was struck, like others, at the sight of this extreme equality of conditions and I discovered without difficulty . . ."

more each day; and this same democracy that reigned in American societies, appeared to me to advance rapidly toward power in Europe.[e]

From that moment, I conceived the idea of the book you are about to read.[f]

e. In the margin: "≠I remember that I saw something analogous in France; I think that you can usefully examine the effects in the two countries, and I conceive the idea of the book.≠" Another version is presented to the side that specifies: "≠in Europe and principally in my own country.≠"

The version not struck out in the manuscript says: ". . . appeared to me ready to take power among us." Hervé de Tocqueville remarks: "The word *ready* does not seem good to me. Besides, isn't it too absolute relative to what is still happening at the moment among us and to the government that succeeded the Restoration?"

Next to this observation, another is found, probably from Édouard de Tocqueville, brother of Alexis: "I also agree that this expression must be softened" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 9).

The criticisms of Hervé de Tocqueville, father of Alexis, of Edouard and Hippolyte de Tocqueville, his brothers, and those of his friends Gustave de Beaumont and Louis de Kergorlay, made at the time of reading a copy of the manuscript of the first *Democracy,* are known to us thanks to a copy in Bonnel's hand. The latter does not identify the authors. Nonetheless, the written comments can be attributed to them without great difficulty, by taking into account tone, style, and the following facts: the observations of Louis de Kergorlay consisted of small slips of paper inserted into the manuscript (only a few of them remain relating to the introduction and to the last section of chapter X of the 1835 part); certain of his notes on the introduction have been published in the correspondence of Tocqueville and Kergorlay (cf. *OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 364–68; note that the list reproduced on p. 368 is Tocqueville's, not Kergorlay's); all comments using the *vous* form can be attributed to Beaumont, who always used *vous* with Tocqueville, in distinction to the members of Tocqueville's family and Kergorlay; finally a letter included in the critical observations (reproduced in note c for p. 142) and some sentences of the first readers of the manuscript inform us that the notes found alongside the commentaries of Hervé were written by Édouard de Tocqueville. By elimination, some remaining less interesting comments could be by Hippolyte, older brother of Alexis. Certain reflections inserted between texts seem to us to be by Alexis himself.

The whole of these commentaries are found at the Beinecke Library under the classification CIIIb. There are also a few brief commentaries by Hervé de Tocqueville for chapter IX of the second part of the first volume of 1835 under the classification YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 14–17.

f. At the top of the sheet appears, crossed out, the beginning of the section IMPORTANCE OF WHAT PRECEDES IN RELATION TO EUROPE, the conclusion of chapter 9 of the second part of volume II, constituting at the start the conclusion of the book (since chapter 10 was added at the last moment). This fact, as well as numerous similarities and displacements of paragraphs between the introduction and the conclusion of chapter 9, indicate that the two chapters were very likely written at the same time, probably at the end of the spring or at the beginning of the summer of 1834.

A great democratic revolution is taking place[g] among us; everyone sees it, but not everyone judges it in the same way. Some consider it as something new and, taking it for an accident, they hope still to be able to stop it; while others judge it irresistible, because it seems to them the most continuous, oldest and most permanent fact known in history.

I look back for a moment to what France was seven hundred years ago: I find it divided up among a small number of families who own the land and govern the inhabitants; at that time, the right to command is passed down with inheritances from generation to generation; men have only a single way to act on one another, force; you discover only a single source of power, landed property.

But then the political power of the clergy becomes established and is soon expanding.[h] The clergy opens its ranks to all, to the poor and to the

g. In the manuscript: ". . . is reaching completion among us."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "This sentence seems too absolute to me for the reasons that I have just enumerated a short while ago; instead of the words *reaching completion,* I would like better *seems due to take place.*"

Édouard de Tocqueville: "That is right" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 9).

h. The *saints.* Men committed to the *moral* grandeur of man.

Saints taken from all classes.

Political power of the clergy that makes men of all classes arrive at the government.

[In the margin: Ascending movement of *time,* descending movement of *nobles.*]

Introduction of jurists into the government produces the same effect.

The Crusades that enervate the nobility and divide lands.

The financiers. Importance that the perpetual wars of the Middle Ages give to them. The middle classes are introduced by them into government.

Granting of freedom to the towns.

Personal estates. Tyranny toward the Jews that brings about the invention of paper wealth.

Instruction begun by the monks in the cathedrals. Religion awakens the arts. Introduction of men of letters into government. Political power of the University of Paris.

Granting of nobility that brings commoners into the government by the nobility (1270).

[In the margin: Equality penetrates finally into government by the nobility.]

Favoritism of the kings that brings men from nothing to power. Pierre de Brosse, minister after having been a barber (1275).

Laws of exclusive privileges that prevent vassals from becoming too powerful.

Introduction of towns into the Estates General (1304).

Taste for literature that opens up a new importance to men of all classes. Estab-

rich, to the commoner and to the lord; equality begins to penetrate through the Church into the government, and someone who would have vegetated as a serf in eternal slavery takes his place as a priest among nobles and often goes to take a seat above kings.

As society becomes more civilized and more stable with time, the different relationships among men become more complicated and more numerous. The need for civil laws is intensely felt. Then jurists arise; they emerge from the dark precinct of the courts and from the dusty recess of the clerks' offices, and they go to sit in the court of the prince, alongside feudal barons covered with ermine and iron.

Kings ruin themselves in great enterprises; nobles exhaust themselves in private wars; commoners enrich themselves in commerce. The influence of money begins to make itself felt in affairs of State. Trade is a new source of power, and financiers become a political power that is scorned and flattered.

Little by little, enlightenment spreads; the taste for literature and the arts reawakens; then the mind becomes an element of success; knowledge is a means of government; intelligence, a social force; men of letters reach public affairs.

As new roads to achieve power are found, however, we see the value of birth fall. In the XIth century, nobility had an inestimable value; it is pur-

lishment of floral games (1324).[TN 1]

Discovery of firearms that equalizes the unprotected villein with the nobleman covered in iron (1328).

The *Jacquerie.* The uprising of the bourgeois of Paris (1358).

Wars with the English that destroy or ruin the nobility.

Factions of the Armagnacs and the Burgundians that give importance to the people. The nobles use them as instruments.

Beginning of heresies. Jan Huss (1414).

Institution of permanent armies that finishes undermining feudal power (1446).

Immense commercial and personal fortunes. Jacques Coeur.

End of the Eastern Empire. Increasing influence of letters in the West (1453).

Discovery of printing toward 1440. The post in . . .

Louis XI.

Discovery of America (1492) (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 18–20).

Translator's Note 1: Floral games were a literary competition held annually in Toulouse and elsewhere in France.

chased in the XIIIth; the first granting of nobility takes place in 1270,[j] and equality is finally introduced into government by aristocracy itself.

During the seven hundred years that have just passed, it sometimes happened that, in order to struggle against royal authority, or to take power away from their rivals, the nobles gave political power to the people.

Even more often, you saw kings make the lower classes of the State participate in government in order to humble[k] the aristocracy.

In France, kings showed themselves to be the most active and most constant of levelers. When they were ambitious and strong, they worked to raise the people to the level of the nobles, and when they were moderate and weak, they allowed[m] the people to put themselves above kings. The former helped democracy by their talents, the latter by their vices. Louis XI and Louis XIV took care to equalize everything below the throne, and Louis XV himself finally descended into the dust with his court.[n]

As soon as citizens began to own the land in ways other than by feudal tenure, and as soon as personal wealth, once known, could in turn create influence and confer power, no discoveries were made in the arts, no further

j. The manuscript says "1370." The correct date is indeed 1270.

k. In the manuscript: ". . . in order to pull down the aristocracy."
Hervé de Tocqueville: "Aren't the words *pull down* too absolute here?"
Édouard de Tocqueville: "Perhaps *humble* would be better" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 10).

m. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I would like better: *they suffered the people,* etc" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 10).

n. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> There is an error here; you undoubtedly wanted to put Louis XVI, for if Louis XV prepared the Revolution by his debaucheries, you cannot deny that he was an absolute king until his last moment and his court all powerful. I do not like the word *dust* which is not of a type elevated enough for the rest of the style; one says, moreover, *fall into the dust,* but one does not say *descend into the dust.*

Édouard de Tocqueville:

> I also find this sentence leaves something to be desired. I will not, however, make the same criticism as my father. It is indeed Louis XV who lost the monarchy by depriving it of all of its moral force, of its dignity and of the prestige that surrounded the throne. Only *fall into the dust* expresses a physical abasement, but it is a moral abasement that must be expressed here, by observing that Louis XV succeeded in killing the aristocracy by discrediting it by the corruption of his court (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 11).

improvements were introduced into commerce and industry, without also creating as many new elements of equality among men. From this moment, all processes that are found, all needs that are born, all desires that demand to be satisfied, are progress toward universal leveling. The taste for luxury, the love of war, the sway of fashion, the most superficial passions of the human heart as well as the most profound, seem to work in concert to impoverish the rich and to enrich the poor.

From the time when works of the mind became sources of strength and wealth, each development of science, each new element of knowledge, each new idea had to be considered as a germ of power put within reach of the people. Poetry, eloquence, memory, mental graces, fires of the imagination, depth of thought, all these gifts that heaven distributes at random, profited democracy, and even when they were in the possession of democracy's adversaries, they still served its cause by putting into relief the natural grandeur of man; so democracy's conquests spread with those of civilization and enlightenment, and literature was an arsenal open to all, where the weak and the poor came each day to find arms.

When you skim the pages of our history you do not find so to speak any great events that for seven hundred years have not turned to the profit of equality.

The Crusades and the English wars decimate the nobles and divide their lands; the institution of the towns introduces democratic liberty into the feudal monarchy; [<the rigors enforced against the Jews bring about the invention of paper wealth[o]>]; the discovery of firearms equalizes the villein and the noble on the field of battle; printing offers equal resources to their minds; the post comes to deposit enlightenment at the threshold of the hut of the poor as at the gate of palaces; Protestantism maintains that all men are equally able to find the way to heaven. America, which comes into sight, presents a thousand new paths to fortune and delivers the wealth and power [reserved to kings] to obscure adventurers.

If you examine what is happening in France from the XIth century every

o. In the margin: "<Letters of exchange, the most democratic of all wealth.>"

fifty years, at the end of each one of these periods, you will not fail to notice that a double revolution has taken place in the state of society. The noble will have slipped on the social ladder, the commoner will have risen; the one descends, the other ascends. Each half-century brings them closer together, and soon they are going to touch.

And this is not only particular to France. In whatever direction we cast our eyes, we notice the same revolution continuing in all of the Christian universe. [Let someone cite to me a republic or a kingdom in which the nobles of today can be compared, I would not say to the nobles of feudal times, but only to their fathers of the last century. {If France hastened the democratic revolution of which I am speaking, France did not give it birth}.

For seven hundred years, there is not a single event among Christians that has not turned to the profit of democracy, not a man who has not served its triumph. <≠The clergy by spreading enlightenment and by applying within its bosom the principle of Christian equality, kings by opposing the people to nobles, nobles by opposing the people to kings; writers and the learned by creating intellectual riches for democracy's use; tradesmen by providing unknown resources for democracy's activity; the navigator by finding democracy new worlds.≠>]

Everywhere you saw the various incidents in the lives of peoples turn to the profit of democracy; all men aided it by their efforts:[p] those who had in view contributing to its success and those who did not think of serving it; those who fought for it and even those who declared themselves its enemies; all were pushed pell-mell along the same path, and all worked in common, some despite themselves, others without their knowledge, blind instruments in the hands of God.

So the gradual development of equality of conditions [{democracy}] is a providential fact;[q] it has the principal characteristics of one: it is universal,

p. In the manuscript: "The Catholic priest and the sectarian, the jurist and the poet, the financier and the learned man, the manufacturer and the navigator, kings, nobles themselves, each worked for the people. The people profited from all efforts. Those who had in view . . ."

q. This sentence has not failed to provoke numerous commentaries. From it certain commentators have been able to conclude a bit quickly that Tocqueville was fatalistic. Thus François Furet ("Le système conceptuel de la Démocratie en Amèrique," in Mi-

chael Hereth and Jutta Höffken, *Alexis de Tocqueville. Zur Politik in der Demokratie,* Baden Baden: Nomos, 1981, pp. 19–52, especially pp. 23 and 28) sees in Tocqueville the development of the idea of inevitability already present in Chateaubriand. If it is incontestable that this paragraph acknowledges a destiny of a providential nature for the idea of equality, the rest of the book, and all of Tocqueville's work, is no less a plea in favor of liberty against all forms of fatalism. Marvin Zetterbaum (*Tocqueville and the Problem of Democracy,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967, pp. 15–19) attempted to resolve this contradiction by attributing to Tocqueville, in this passage, motives of the kind for persuasion and pedagogy: the latter would have insisted on the providential character of democracy in order to take advantage of the religious sentiments of the French aristocracy of the period and thus to persuade the French aristocracy not to oppose the march of democracy. Other authors, in particular Wilhelm Hennis, used a similar argument to see in Tocqueville less of a political thinker than a rhetorician (in the positive sense of the term). Without getting into a discussion of the rhetorical value of Tocqueville's work (what political discourse is not rhetorical?), it is necessary, nonetheless, to point out that in other places in the book Tocqueville sees in the inevitable character of political equality the result of social equality and of the cartesian method. This time the argument has psychological bases. If one time, even if in the middle of revolutionary disorders, men have had the experience of equality or have thought of themselves as equal, it is very difficult afterward to make them accept social inequality and political differences. So social equality is inevitable if it has existed previously, if only for a short moment, and if you accept the principle according to which social conditions determine political life.

The development of social equality remains to be explained. To understand it, it is indispensable to refer to a little known text of Tocqueville, drafted when he worked on *Democracy:* "Mémoire sur le paupérisme" (*Mémoires de la société académique de Cherbourg,* 1835, pp. 293–344, reproduced in *Commentaire* XXIII (1983): 630–36; XXIV, pp. 880–88). There Tocqueville sketches a general history of civilization. Almost literally following the Rousseau of *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité,* he offers a picture according to which men are equal solely when, coming out of the forests, they seek to associate together with their fellow men in order to gain sufficient food and shelter against the elements. Inequality owes its origin to ownership of territory which, in turn, produces the aristocracy.

> If you pay attention to what is happening in the world since the origin of societies, you will discover without difficulty that equality is found only at the two ends of civilization. Savages are equal to each other because they are all equally weak and ignorant. Very civilized men can all become equal because they all have at their disposal analogous means to attain comfort and happiness. Between these two extremes are found inequality of conditions, the wealth, enlightenment, power of some, the poverty, ignorance and weakness of all the others (p. 636).

The process of equality of conditions is dependent on the increase in intellectual and material needs. Tocqueville writes again:

it is lasting, it escapes every day from human power; all events, like all men, serve its development.[r]

Men leave the plow to take up the shuttle and the hammer; from the cottage they pass into the factory; by acting in this way, they obey the immutable laws that preside over the growth of organized societies. So you can no more assign a stopping point to this movement than impose bounds on human perfectibility. The limit of the one like that of the others is known only to God (p. 634).

Equality is consequently the direct result of a law of the evolution of intelligence, and only intermediately, like all laws, a product of Providence. Finally, it must be recalled that Tocqueville is content to note here what the entire book will demonstrate and make convincing by the development of precise arguments. (See *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 375; according to André Jardin, this letter in reality would have been written to Eugène Stoffels.)

r. Democracy! Don't you notice that these are the waters of the flood? Don't you see them advance constantly by a slow and irresistible effort? <Already they cover the fields and the cities, they roll over the destroyed battlements of fortified castles and come to wash against the steps of thrones.> You withdraw, the waves continue their march. You flee, they run behind you. Here you are finally in your last refuge and scarcely have you sat down to take a breath when the waves have already covered the space that still separates you from them. So let us know how to face the future steadily and with open eyes. Instead of wanting to raise impotent dikes, let us seek rather to build the holy [v: tutelary] ark that must carry the human species over this ocean without shores.

But this is what hardly occupies us already placed in the middle . . .

It would be very insane to believe that we have seen the end of this great revolution. This movement continues, no one can say where it will stop. For we are already lacking terms of comparison. Conditions are more equal among us than they have ever been in any time and in any country of the world.

Thus the very grandeur of what is done prevents us from foreseeing what can still be done.

What will the probable consequences of this immense social revolution be? What new order will emerge from the debris of the one that is falling? Who can say? The men of the IVth century, witnesses to the barbarian invasions, gave themselves over, like us, to a thousand conjectures, but no one thought to foresee the universal establishment of the feudal system that followed the ruin of Rome in all of Europe. To discern effects without going back to causes, to judge what is without knowing what will be, isn't that moreover the whole of human destiny? We see that the sun changes place and that it advances constantly toward other heavens, we recognize that its movement is regulated, we feel that it obeys the hand of the Creator, but we will not be able to determine the force that makes it move and we are carried along with the sun toward a still unknown point in the universe.

In the middle of this impenetrable obscurity of the future, however, the eye sees some shafts of light. You can glimpse even now that the centuries of limited mon-

Would it be wise to believe that a social movement that comes from so far could be suspended by the efforts of a generation?[s] Do you think that

archy are rapidly passing and that modern societies are carried by a force superior to that of man either toward the republic or toward despotism and perhaps alternately from one to the other. As for me, I admit, in this century of liberty I fear for the future liberty of the human species. I [do not (ed.)] draw my fears from the past, which cannot be reproduced, but from the very nature of man, which does not change.

I see that by a strange oddity of our nature the passion for equality, which should decrease along with inequality of conditions, on the contrary increases as conditions become equal. In proportion [that (ed.)] the trace of hierarchies disappears, that passion alone seems to rule the human heart. Now, men [have (ed.)] two ways to be equal. They can all have the same rights or all be equally deprived of rights, and I tremble at the idea of the choice that they are going to make when I see the little care that is taken to (illegible word) [instruct? (ed.)] them, when I think how much more difficult it is to live free than to vegetate in slavery. I know that there are many honest men who are scarcely frightened by this idea and who would ask no better than to sleep peacefully in the arms of despotism while stammering some words about liberty. But my tastes, like my reason, distance me from them. Those who want thus to achieve order by way of despots hardly know what they desire. *Liberty* sometimes happens to make light of the existence of men, to be lavish with the resources of society, to disturb souls and to make beliefs waver, but despotism attacks all these things in their principle and in their [broken text (ed.)] (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 27–30).

From the variant of this text (YTC, CVb, pp. 30–32, 26–31), the following details will be retained (pp. 29–30):

To claim to stop the march of democracy would be folly. God willing, there is still time to direct it and to prevent it from leading us to the despotism of one [v: military] man, that is to say to the most detestable form of government that the human mind has ever been able to imagine.

Sometimes liberty happens to make light of the existence of men, to be lavish with the resources of society, to disturb souls, to make beliefs waver.

But despotism attacks these very things in their principle and their essence. It prevents men from multiplying, it exhausts the source of wealth and of well-being, it confuses notions of good and evil and, by taking from man his independence [v: free will], it removes from him as much trace as it can of his divine origin. A free man often does things unworthy of himself, but a slave is less than a man.

To abhor despotism is not to do the work of a citizen, but the act of a man.

s. Hervé de Tocqueville: "The word *effort* that I advised deleting a bit above is found again here. Is the word *generation* suitable? It includes the idea of unanimity of action which will certainly not be found against democracy in the present generation" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 12–13).

after having destroyed feudalism and vanquished kings, democracy will retreat before the bourgeois and the rich?[t] Will it stop now that it has become so strong and its adversaries so weak?

So where are we going? No one can say; for we are already lacking terms of comparison; conditions are more equal today among Christians than they have ever been in any time or in any country in the world; thus we are prevented by the magnitude of what is already done from foreseeing what can still be done.

The entire book that you are about to read has been written under the impression of a sort of religious terror produced in the soul of the author by the sight of this irresistible revolution that has marched for so many centuries over all obstacles, and that we still see today advancing amid the ruins that it has made.

It isn't necessary for God himself to speak in order for us to discover sure signs of his will; it is enough to examine the regular march of nature and the continuous tendency of events; I know, without the Creator raising his voice, that the stars in space follow the curves traced by his fingers.

If long observations and sincere meditations led men of today to recognize that the gradual and progressive development of equality is at once the past and the future of their history, this discovery alone would give this development the sacred character of the will of God. To want to stop democracy would then seem to be struggling against God himself, and it would only remain for nations to accommodate themselves to the social state that Providence imposes on them.[u]

t. In the margin: "≠The democratic revolution that carries us along will not retreat after having triumphed for seven hundred years over so many obstacles.≠"

u. This paragraph and the preceding one do not exist in the manuscript. In their place, you find this: "If, to want to stop the development of democracy, is to struggle against God himself, what then remains for men to do if not to accommodate themselves to the social state that Providence imposes on them?"

The two new paragraphs were probably added following this suggestion by Louis de Kergorlay:

> The thought enclosed in this paragraph is very beautiful and fundamental, but unfortunately little in fashion, little spread among the public which remains more matter of fact. I believe that to make the public see that it is a thought, that it is a sentiment,

Christian peoples seem to me to offer today a frightening spectacle.[v] The movement that sweeps them along is already so strong that it cannot be suspended, and it is not yet so rapid as to despair of directing it. Their fate is in their hands; but soon it escapes them.[w]

that it is something serious, it must be developed a bit more. It is one of the building blocks of your introduction. I have taken the risk of drafting the following three or four sentences as more or less encompassing what I understand as the development of your idea. So in my mind, I put this in place of your paragraph:

"Where would the hand of God be more visible than in the most immutable facts of nature? Where does man thus find other proofs of the existence and of *the will* of the divinity, than in the works of his creator, and what more sublime work could he examine than his own nature?

"So if sincere meditations led him one day to acknowledge that the progressive development of democracy is at once the past and the future of his history, this discovery alone would give to this development the sacred character of the will of our sovereign master, to all resistance against this march of our destiny that of a struggle against God himself, and that of a *duty* to the search for all that can accommodate humanity to the new social state imposed by Providence."

I do not know if you will find these sentences clear or vague, but what I want to express to you is the need for a development that elevates the soul of the reader (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 23–24).

v. In the manuscript: ". . . offer today the most terrible of spectacles."

Hervé de Tocqueville: *"The most terrible* here is too strong an expression, since the author says farther along that you must not yet despair of being able to direct the movement."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "The word *terrible* does not seem to me very good either; this expression which prepares for something frightening is not justified by what follows" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 13).

w. It would be falling into a great error to believe that the period in which we live resembled any other and that the habitual routine of human passions could be applied to it equally. At the moment when I am speaking, the destinies of the Christian world are in suspense and nations find themselves in a position unique in their lives. The movement that carries them along is already too strong to be able to hope to stop it and not yet strong enough to despair of directing it.

At the period in which we are, what are the destinies of a man, the fortune of a law, the successes of a party? These interests of one day disappear before an interest a thousand times greater still, that touches all men and all parties equally and that must be the goal of all laws. Today the question is no longer only knowing what progress civilization will make, but what the fate of civilization will be, not what laws will regulate property, but what the very principle of property will be. It is no longer only a matter of regulating political rights, but civil rights, inheritance, paternity, marriage like the *right to vote* [v: property qualification].

To instruct democracy, to revive its beliefs if possible, to purify its mores, to regulate its movements, to substitute little by little the science of public affairs for its inexperience, knowledge of its true interests for its blind instincts; to adapt its government to times and places; to modify it according to circumstances and men; such is the first of duties imposed today on those who lead society.

A new political science[x] is needed for a world entirely new[y] [{for a unique situation, laws without precedents are needed}].

The time has passed when you struggled to conquer or to keep, not some liberty, but all liberties together, up to that of living.

Today, in a word, you must not forget, it is still much more a matter of the very existence of society than of the forms of the government.

You can no longer have anything except despotism or the *republic.*

Despotism such as our fathers never knew in any period of history, Roman or Byzantine despotism, mixture of corruption [v: plunder], barbarism, brutality and subtlety, of obsequiousness and of arrogance, no more collective resistance, no more *esprit de corps,* family *honor,* aristocratic (four illegible words). Honest men who want absolute power today do not know what they want. They will no longer have the good absolute power of the old monarchy, moderated by mores . . . but the absolute power of the Roman Empire . . . (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 20–21, 21–22).

x. This affirmation is central and cannot be minimized. Criticism has too generally put the accent on Tocqueville as a traveler, observer of mores and institutions, historian foreshadowing the sociologist. Whereas, the objective that Tocqueville is fixed upon is above all *political.* The fact that this "science" is defined in terms that to us signal more sociology, history, or psychology must not diminish its importance. Like all political thinkers, like Montequieu or Rousseau, Tocqueville wants to try to rethink what he calls "political science" and to redefine it. He will not cease to come back to the question of the language used to designate concepts and new realities; he will introduce neologisms. It is also the meaning of the memorable speech delivered at the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in which the author presents himself as a political theorist. It is precisely his talents as a theoretician, he thinks, that have prevented him from making a political career:

> The art of writing suggests, in fact, to those who have practiced it for a long time habits of mind little favorable to the conduct of affairs. It subjugates them to the logic of ideas, when the crowd never obeys anything except that of passions. It gives them the taste for the fine, the delicate, the ingenious, the original, while it is the awful commonplaces that lead the world. (Speech delivered to the annual public meeting of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, *Séances et travaux de*

But that is what we scarcely consider; placed in the middle of a rapid river, we obstinately fix our eyes on some debris that we still see on the bank, while the current carries us away and pushes us backwards toward the abyss.

There is no people of Europe among whom the great social revolution[z] that I have just described has made more rapid progress than among us; but here it has always marched haphazardly.

The heads of State [{legislator}] never thought to prepare anything in advance for it; it came about despite them or without their knowledge. The most powerful, most intelligent and most moral classes of the nation did

l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques, XXI, 1852, p. 303; this speech has been reproduced with some omissions in *OCB,* IX, pp. 116–33).

For Tocqueville, political science is a science based on the faculties and eternal instincts of human nature; it spreads from philosophy to the civil law, from theory to written laws and to facts. Such an upside down pyramid is conceived so that the closer you get to facts, the farther you get from generalities: "There is no commentator who does not often rely upon the abstract and general truths that writers on politics have found, and the latter need constantly to base their theory on particular facts and on the studied institutions that commentators have revealed or described" (*ibid.,* p. 305). Parallel to this science exists the art of governing, politics of the practical order, able to be modified constantly. The degree of civilization of a people is always proportional to the complexity of its political science. In other words, the more civilization, the more elaborate the political science; a new world demands as well a new political science:

> Among all civilized peoples, the political sciences give birth or at least give form to general ideas, from which then follow particular facts, in the middle of which politicians agitate, and the laws that they think they invent. The political sciences form around each society something like a kind of intellectual atmosphere in which the minds of the governed and of those who govern breathe, and from which both, often without knowing, sometimes without wanting to know, draw the principles of their conduct. Barbarians are the only ones where only practice is recognized in politics (*ibid.,* p. 306).

y. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not know if you can use the expression *for a world entirely new* while speaking of old Europe. I know well that it is a matter of the political world, but the changes there are not so abrupt that *world entirely new* applies very exactly."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Current society is certainly entirely new by comparison with that of forty years ago" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 13).

z. "The French Revolution did the same good as the Nile that fertilizes the fields of Egypt by covering them with muck" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 97).

not try to take hold of it in order to direct it. So democracy has been abandoned to its wild instincts; it has grown up like those children, deprived of paternal care, who raise themselves in the streets of our cities, and who know society only by its vices and miseries. We still seemed unaware of its existence, when it took hold of power without warning. Then each person submitted with servility to its slightest desires; it was adored as the image of strength; when later it was weakened by its own excesses, legislators conceived the imprudent plan of destroying it instead of trying to instruct and correct it, and not wanting to teach it to govern, they thought only about pushing it away from government.

The result was that the democratic revolution took place in the material aspect of society without happening in the laws, ideas, habits and mores,[a] the change that would have been necessary to make this revolu-

a. This idea is found in the fourth lecture of Guizot's course on civilization in France. "The revolution that the last century caused to burst forth was a social revolution; it was much more concerned with changing the reciprocal situation of men than their internal and personal dispositions; it wanted to reform the society rather than the individual" (François Guizot, *Histoire de la civilisation en France* in *Cours d'histoire moderne,* Brussels: Hauman, 1839, p. 160). Tocqueville attended this course on the history of civilization in France taught by Guizot at the Sorbonne in 1829–1830. The notes for the course, from 11 April 1829 to 29 March 1830, are preserved. His correspondence indicates nonetheless that he attended the course before the month of April (see *Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 76–77). Tocqueville, in a letter to Beaumont, dated 30 August 1829 (*OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 80–81), asserts that he has already read "most of Guizot" and that he found him so "prodigious" that he proposes to his friend to read Guizot with him during the winter. Reading Guizot enlightened him notably about the IVth century (note r from p. 12 bears a reference to the same century). Several times, furthermore, Tocqueville will allude in the *Democracy* to the eighth lecture of the *Cours.* Two years later, when he is in America, he writes to his friend and colleague Ernest de Chabrol: "We cannot find here a book that is very necessary to us for helping us analyze American society; this is the lectures of Guizot, including what he said and published three years ago on Roman society and the Middle Ages" (New York, 18 May 1831, YTC, BI12). It is following Guizot, in the fourth lecture of the *Cours,* that Tocqueville divides his first notes on American society into civil state and social state.

Guizot did not fail to find himself in Tocqueville's work. In *De la démocratie en France (janvier 1849)* (Brussels: J. Petit, 1849), whose title alone makes explicit reference to Tocqueville, he seems to blame the latter for having taken the concept of equality and having transformed it into a universal process that pushes irremediably toward popular sovereignty while making the dominion of the middle classes disappear by its momen-

tion[b] useful. We therefore have democracy, minus what must attenuate its vices and bring out its natural advantages; and seeing already the evils that it brings, we are still unaware of the good that it can give.

When royal power, supported by the aristocracy, peacefully governed the peoples of Europe, society, amid its miseries, enjoyed several kinds of happiness, which are difficult to imagine and appreciate today.

The power of some subjects raised insurmountable barriers to the tyranny of the prince; and kings, feeling vested in the eyes of the crowd with a nearly divine character, drew, from the very respect that they caused, the will not to abuse their power.

Placed an immense distance from the people, the nobles nonetheless took the type of benevolent and tranquil interest in the fate of the people that the shepherd[c] gives to his flock; and without seeing the poor man as their equal, they watched over his lot as a trust put in their hands by Providence.

Not having conceived the idea of a social state other than their own, not imagining that they could ever be equal to their rulers, the people accepted the benefits and did not question the rights of their rulers. They loved them when they were lenient and just and submitted without difficulty and without servility to their rigors as to inevitable evils sent to them by the hand of God. Custom and mores had, moreover, established limits to tyranny and founded a kind of right in the very midst of force.

Since the noble did not think that someone would want to wrest from him the privileges that he believed legitimate, and the serf regarded his

tum. It is not the only time, as we will see, that Tocqueville repeats an idea of Guizot for his particular ends.

See Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Alianza Universidad, 1989), pp. 353–91; Aurelian Craiutu, *Liberalism Under Siege: The Political Thought of the French Doctrinaires* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003), pp. 87–122.

b. Édouard de Tocqueville: "How can a revolution take place in the *material aspect* of society without the ideas, laws, habits and mores seconding it? So what then do you call the material aspect of society?" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 14).

c. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I am afraid that some might respond to the author that these shepherds were really wolves. You will avoid this disadvantage by generalizing less, by putting *a portion of the nobles"* (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 14).

inferiority as a result of the immutable order of nature, it is conceivable that a kind of reciprocal benevolence could be established between these two classes sharing so different a fate. You then saw in society inequality, miseries, but souls were not degraded.

It is not the use of power or the habit of obedience that depraves men; it is the use of a power that they consider as illegitimate and obedience to a power that they regard as usurped and oppressive.

On one side were wealth, force, leisure and with them the pursuit of luxury, refinements of taste, pleasures of the mind, devotion to the arts; on the other, work, coarseness and ignorance.

But within this ignorant and coarse crowd, you met energetic passions, generous sentiments, profound beliefs and untamed virtues.

The social body organized in this way could have stability, power, and above all glory.

But ranks are merging; barriers raised between men are falling; estates are being divided; power is being shared, enlightenment is spreading, intellects are becoming equal; the social state is becoming democratic, and the dominion of democracy is finally being established peacefully in institutions and in mores.

Then I imagine a society where all, seeing the law as their work, would love it and would submit to it without difficulty; where since the authority of the government is respected as necessary and not as divine, the love that is felt for the head of State would be not a passion, but a reasoned and calm sentiment. Since each person has rights and is assured of preserving his rights, a manly confidence and a kind of reciprocal condescension, as far from pride as from servility, would be established among all classes.

Instructed in their true interests, the people would understand that, in order to take advantage of the good things of society, you must submit to its burdens. The free association of citizens would then be able to replace the individual power of the nobles, and the State would be sheltered from tyranny and from license.

I understand that in a democratic State, constituted in this manner, society will not be immobile; but the movements of the social body will be

able to be regulated and progressive; if you meet less brilliance there than within an aristocracy, you will find less misery; pleasures will be less extreme and well-being more general; knowledge not as great and ignorance more rare; sentiments less energetic and habits more mild; there you will notice more vices and fewer crimes.[d]

If there is no enthusiasm and fervor of beliefs, enlightenment and experience will sometimes obtain great sacrifices from citizens; each man, equally weak, will feel an equal need for his fellows; and knowing that he can gain their support only on condition of lending them his help, he will discover without difficulty that for him particular interest merges with the general interest.

The nation taken as a body will be less brilliant, less glorious, less strong perhaps; but the majority of citizens there will enjoy a more prosperous lot, and the people will appear untroubled, not because they despair of being better, but because they know they are well-off.[e]

If everything was not good and useful in such an order of things, society at least would have appropriated everything useful and good that such an order can present; and men, while abandoning forever the social advantages that aristocracy can provide, would have taken from democracy all the good that the latter can offer to them.

d. "For nearly ten years I have been thinking a part of the things that I revealed to you just now. I was in America only to enlighten myself on this point," Tocqueville mentions to Kergorlay (?) in a letter dated from 1835 (?) (*OC,* XIII, 1, p. 374). See note q for p. 12.

A certain number of the constituent ideas of the *Democracy* already appear in a letter from Tocqueville to Charles Stoffels, dated Versailles, 21 April 1830 (that is, nearly a year before the departure for the United States). This letter is reproduced in appendix V.

e. Mass floating in the middle, inert, egoistic, without energy, without patriotism, sensual, sybaritic, that has only instincts, that lives from day to day, that becomes in turn the plaything of all the others./

Moderation without virtue, nor courage; moderation that is born from cowardice of the heart and not from virtue, from exhaustion, from fear, from egoism; tranquillity, that does not come about because you are well-off, but because you do not have the courage and the energy necessary to seek something better. Debasement of souls.

The passions of old men that end in impotence (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 36–37).

But we, while giving up the social state of our ancestors, while throwing pell-mell their institutions, their ideas, and their mores behind us, what have we put in their place?

The prestige of royal power has vanished, without being replaced by the majesty of laws; today the people scorn authority, but they fear it, and fear extracts more from them than respect and love formerly yielded.

I notice that we have destroyed the individual existences that could struggle separately against tyranny [{but I do not see that we have created a collective strength to fulfill their function}], but I see the government that alone inherits all the prerogatives wrenched from families, from corporations or from men; so, to the sometimes oppressive but often conservative strength of a small number of citizens, the weakness of all has succeeded.

The division of fortunes has reduced the distance that separated the poor from the rich; but by coming closer together, they seem to have found new reasons to hate each other, and, eyeing one another with looks full of terror and envy, they mutually push each other away from power; for the one as for the other, the idea of rights does not exist, and force appears to them both as the only reason for the present and the sole guarantee of the future.

The poor man has kept most of the prejudices of his fathers, without their beliefs; their ignorance, without their virtues; he has accepted, as the rule for his actions, the doctrine of interest, without knowing the science of interest, and his egoism is as wanting in enlightenment as his devotion formerly was.

Society is tranquil, not because it is conscious of its strength and its well-being, but on the contrary because it believes itself weak and frail; it is afraid of dying by making an effort. Everyone feels that things are going badly, but no one has the necessary courage and energy to seek something better; we have desires, regrets, sorrows and joys that produce nothing visible or lasting, similar to the passions of old men that end in impotence.

Thus we have abandoned what the old state could present of the good, without acquiring what the current state would be able to offer of the useful; we have destroyed an aristocratic society, [and we do not think about organizing on its ruins a moral and tranquil democracy] and, stopping out

of complacency amid the debris of the former edifice, we seem to want to settle there forever.[f]

What is happening in the intellectual world is no less deplorable.

f. There are two states of society that I imagine without difficulty, the one that has been, the other that could be.

We have left the virtues of the old order without taking the ideas of the new order.

We have thrown pell-mell behind us the vices and the virtues of our ancestors, their habits, their ideas, their mores, and we have put nothing in their place (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 106–107).

ARISTOCRATIC AND MONARCHICAL SYSTEM. OUR FATHERS.

1. Love of the King.
2. (illegible word) aristocracy.
3. Individual strength against tyranny.
4. Beliefs, devotion, wild virtues, instincts.
5. Idea of duty.
6. Tranquillity of the people that arises from their not seeing anything better.
7. Monarchical immobility.
8. Strength and grandeur of the state which you reach by the constant efforts of some.

DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN SYSTEM.

1. Respect for law, idea of rights.
2. Benevolence arising from equality of rights.
3. Association.
4. Interest well understood, enlightenment.
5. Love of liberty.
6. That they know that they are well-off.
7. Orderly and progressive movement of democracy.
8. Id. by the simultaneous efforts of all.

CURRENT STATE.

1. Fear of authority that is scorned.
2. War of the poor and the rich, individual egoism without strength.
3. Equal weakness without collective power {of association}.
4. Prejudices without beliefs, ignorance without virtues, the doctrine of interest without the science, stupid egoism.
5. Taste for license.
6. Who do not have the courage to change, passions of old men (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 110–11).

Hindered in its march or abandoned without support to its disorderly passions, democracy in France has overturned everything that it met on its way, weakening what it did not destroy. You did not see it take hold of society little by little in order to establish its dominion peacefully; it has not ceased to march amid the disorders and the agitation of battle. Animated by the heat of the struggle, pushed beyond the natural limits of his opinion by the opinions and excesses of his adversaries, each person loses sight of the very object of his pursuits and uses a language that corresponds badly to his true sentiments and to his secret instincts.

From that results the strange confusion that we are forced to witness.

I search my memory in vain; I find nothing that deserves to excite more distress and more pity than what is happening before our eyes;[g] it seems that today we have broken the natural bond that unites opinions to tastes and actions to beliefs; the sympathy that has been observed in all times between the sentiments and the ideas of men seems to be destroyed, and you would say that all the laws of moral analogy are abolished.

You still meet among us Christians full of zeal, whose religious souls love to be nourished by the truths of the other life; they are undoubtedly going to become active in favor of human liberty, source of all moral grandeur. [<Their hearts will open without difficulty to the holy love of country, this religion of the political world so fruitful in generous devotions.>] Christianity, which has made all men equal before God, will not be loath to see all citizens equal before the law. But, by a combination of strange events, religion is at the moment involved amid the powers that democracy is overturning, and it often happens that religion rejects the equality that it loves and curses liberty as an adversary, while, by taking liberty by the hand, religion could be able to sanctify its efforts.

Next to these religious men, I find others whose sights are turned toward the earth rather than toward heaven; partisans of liberty, not only because

g. Hervé de Tocqueville:

This expression is too strong. It takes the thought beyond the truth. What happened at the time of the imprisonment of King Jean and under the last of the Valois was of a nature to cause more distress than what is happening currently. So I would delete the words *more distress* in the sentence and I would put only: *I find nothing that deserves to excite more pity* (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 15–16).

they see in it the origin of the most noble virtues, but above all because they consider it as the source of the greatest advantages, they sincerely desire to secure its dominion and to have men taste its benefits. I understand that the latter are going to hasten to call religion to their aid, for they must know that you cannot establish the reign of liberty without that of mores, nor found mores without beliefs; but they have seen religion in the ranks of their adversaries; that is enough for them; some attack religion and the others dare not defend it [all lack enlightenment or courage].

Past centuries saw base and venal souls advocate slavery, while independent spirits and generous hearts struggled without hope to save human liberty. But today you often meet men naturally noble and proud whose opinions are in direct opposition to their tastes, and who speak in praise of the servility and baseness that they have never known for themselves. There are others, in contrast, who speak of liberty as if they could feel what is holy and great in it and who loudly claim on behalf of humanity rights that they have always disregarded.

I notice virtuous and peaceful men placed naturally by their pure morals, tranquil habits, prosperity and enlightenment at the head of the populations that surround them. Full of a sincere love of country, they are ready to make great sacrifices for it. Civilization, however, often finds them to be adversaries; they confuse its abuses with its benefits, and in their minds the idea of evil is indissolubly united with the idea of the new [and they seem to want to establish a monstrous bond between virtue, misery and ignorance so that all three may be struck with the same blow[h]].

Nearby I see other men who, in the name of progress, try hard to materialize man, wanting to find the useful without attending to the just, want-

h. Hervé de Tocqueville: "This last thought is not very clear. Would it perhaps seem a bit gigantesque? It is a kind of irony. But is it very accurate? Who would want to strike virtue? No one, I think."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "This sentence did not fully satisfy me either. I do not see clearly why the persons in question here would desire that virtue, misery and ignorance be struck with the same blow" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 16).

ing to find knowledge far from beliefs and well-being separate from virtue. These claim to be champions of modern civilization and they arrogantly put themselves at its head, usurping a place that is abandoned to them and that their unworthiness denies to them.[j]

So where are we?

Religious men combat liberty, and the friends of liberty attack religion; noble and generous spirits speak in praise of slavery, and base and servile souls advocate independence; honest and enlightened citizens are enemies of all progress, while men without patriotism and without mores become the apostles of civilization and enlightenment!

Have all centuries resembled ours then? Has man always had before his eyes, as today, a world where nothing is connected, where virtue is without genius,[k] and genius without honor; where love of order merges with the taste for tyrants and the holy cult of liberty with scorn for human laws; where conscience throws only a doubtful light upon human actions; where nothing any longer seems either forbidden, or permitted, or honest, or shameful, or true, or false?

Will I think that the Creator made man in order to leave him to struggle endlessly amid the intellectual miseries that surround us? I cannot believe it; God is preparing for European societies a future more settled and more calm; I do not know his plans, but I will not cease to believe in them because I cannot fathom them, and I will prefer to doubt my knowledge than his justice.

There is a country in the world where the great social revolution that I am speaking about seems more or less to have reached its natural limits; it came about there in a simple and easy way, or rather it can be said that this

j. In the margin: "≠Thus some wanted virtue and misery; others, well-being without virtue.≠"

k. Hervé de Tocqueville: "This whole sentence is very beautiful and I would very much like to let the word *genius* go by. But I cannot do so, because it expresses more than is necessary. It will be asked where is the genius in France and each person will answer: I do not know."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "After long and careful reflection, I do not share the opinion of my father. *Genius* here means intellectual superiorities and there are always some in a country" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 17).

country sees the results of the democratic revolution that is taking place among us, without having had the revolution itself.

The emigrants who came to settle in America at the beginning of the XVIIth century in a way freed the principle of democracy from all those principles that it struggled against within the old societies of Europe, and they transplanted it alone to the shores of the New World. There it was able to grow in liberty and, moving ahead with mores, to develop peacefully in the laws.

It seems to me beyond doubt that sooner or later, we will arrive, like the Americans, at a nearly complete equality of conditions. From that, I do not conclude that one day we are necessarily called to draw from such a social state the political consequences that the Americans have drawn from it.[m] I am very far from believing that they have found the only form of government that democracy may take; but in the two countries the generating cause of laws and mores is the same; that is enough for us to have an immense interest in knowing what that generating cause has produced in each of them.

So it is not only to satisfy a curiosity, legitimate for that matter, that I examined America; I wanted to find lessons there from which we would be

m. Hervé de Tocqueville:

I would like the author to have added a sentence here to bring out clearly that he does not mean that the forms of the American government can be adapted to the old European societies whose conditions are so different. Alexis thinks that democracy will end by dominating everywhere, while keeping at the head of government an executive power more or less strong, more or less concentrated. He must, I think, make that understood very clearly by his reader.

Édouard de Tocqueville:

I find a great deal of accuracy in this observation. You must above all inculcate clearly in the reader the conviction that you have not returned from America with the fixed idea of adapting American institutions to Europe. So it would be good to say that you foresee the establishment of democracy and of equality of conditions which is the consequence of democracy, but *very often* with other forms and a different social organization; the character, habits and mores of the two countries being eminently dissimilar (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 18).

The phrase "I am very far . . . that democracy may take" does not appear in the manuscript.

able to profit. You would be strangely mistaken if you thought that I wanted to do a panegyric; whoever reads this book will be clearly convinced that such was not my purpose;[n] nor was my goal to advocate any particular form of government in general; for I am among those who believe that there is hardly ever absolute good in laws; I did not even claim to judge if the social revolution, whose march seems irresistible to me, was advantageous or harmful to humanity. I have acknowledged this revolution as an accomplished or nearly accomplished fact, and, from among the peoples who have seen it taking place among them, I sought the people among whom it has reached the most complete and most peaceful development, in order to discern clearly its natural consequences and, if possible, to see the means to make it profitable to men. I admit that in America I saw more than America;[o] I sought there an image of democracy itself, its tendencies, its character, its prejudices, its passions; I wanted to know democracy, if only to know at least what we must hope or fear from it.

In the first part of this work, I tried to show the direction that democracy, delivered in America to its tendencies and abandoned almost without con-

n. "That governments have relative goodness. When Montesquieu . . . I admire him. But when he portrays to me the English constitution as the model of perfection, it seems to me that, for the first time, I see the limit of his genius. This constitution today falls in the same [interrupted text (ed.)]" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 91).

o. Why would I be afraid to say so? While I had my eyes fixed on America, I thought about Europe. I thought about this immense social revolution that is coming to completion among us while we are still discussing its legitimacy and its rights. I thought about the irresistible slope where [we (ed.)] are running, who knows, perhaps toward despotism, perhaps also toward the republic, but definitely toward democracy. There are men who see in the Revolution of 1789 a pure accident and who, like the traveler in the fable, sit down waiting for the river to pass. Vain illusion! Our fathers did not see it being born and we will not see it end. Its turbulent currents will flow for still many generations. More than six hundred years ago the first impulse was given.

[In the margin] Some among us consider the present state as a beginning; others, as an end. It is neither the one nor the other; it is an incident in an immense revolution that began before it and has continued since (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 22–23; see a more or less identical fragment in YTC, CVh, 4, p. 1, and *Souvenirs, OC,* XII, p. 30).

straint to its instincts, gave naturally to laws, the course that it imparted to government, and in general the power that it gained over public affairs. I wanted to know what good and bad it produced. I sought out what precautions the Americans have used to direct it and what others they have omitted, and I undertook to discern the causes that allow it to govern society.

My goal was to portray in a second part [{third volume}] the influence that equality of conditions and the government of democracy exercise in America on civil society, on habits, ideas and mores;[p] but I begin to feel less enthusiasm[q] about accomplishing this plan. Before I can complete in this way the task that I proposed for myself, my work will have become nearly useless. Someone else will soon show readers the principal features of the American character and, hiding the seriousness of the descriptions behind a light veil, will lend truth charms with which I would not be able to adorn it.[1]

p. Although the second part had been published, probably on the recommendation of Gosselin, the publisher, with the title of the first part, Tocqueville had at one moment wanted to entitle it *Influence of Equality on the Ideas and Feelings of Men* (See letter to Mill of 14 November 1839, *Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, p. 326).

q. In the manuscript: ". . . but each day I feel less enthusiasm . . ."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "This turn of phrase seems too explicit to me; it removes in too absolute a way the hope for a 3rd volume."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "That is very true; a sentence more or less like this would be needed: *and I give up at least at present.*

"I also do not like *my work will have become useless.* We do not know if you are speaking about the future work or this one. At least *would become useless* would be necessary" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 19). The manuscript says: ". . . will have become nearly useless."

1. *At the time when I published the first edition of this work, M. Gustave de Beaumont, my traveling companion in America, was still working on his book entitled* Marie, or Slavery in the United States, *which has since appeared. The principal goal of M. de Beaumont was to bring out and make known the situation of Negroes within Anglo-American society. His work will throw a bright and new light on the question of slavery, a vital question for the united republics. I do not know if I am wrong, but it seems to me that the book of M. de Beaumont, after deeply interesting those who want to gather emotions and find descriptions there, will gain a still more solid and more lasting success among readers who, above all, desire true insights and profound truths.*[r]

r. For obvious reasons, the beginning of this note was a bit different in the first edition: "M. Gustave de Beaumont, my traveling companion in America, intends to publish during the first days of 1835, a book entitled *Marie, or Slavery in the United States.* The principal goal . . ."

I do not know if I have succeeded in making known what I saw in America, but I am sure that I sincerely desired to do so, and that I never yielded, except unknowingly, to the need to adapt facts to ideas, instead of subjecting ideas to facts.

When a point could be established with the help of written documents, I have taken care to turn to original texts and to the most authentic and most respected works.[2] I have indicated my sources in notes, and everyone will be able to verify them. When it was a matter of opinions, of political customs, of observations of mores, I sought to consult the most enlightened men. If something happened to be important or doubtful, I was not content with one witness, but decided only on the basis of the body of testimonies.

Here the reader must necessarily take me at my word. I would often have been able to cite in support of what I advance the authority of names that are known to him, or that at least are worthy to be; but I have refrained from doing so. The stranger often learns by the hearth of his host important truths, that the latter would perhaps conceal from a friend; with the stranger you ease the burden of a forced silence; you are not afraid of his indiscretion because he is passing through. Each one of these confidences was recorded by me as soon as received, but they will never emerge from my manuscripts; I prefer to detract from the success of my accounts than to add my name

2. *Legislative and administrative documents have been provided to me with a kindness the memory of which will always stir my gratitude. Among the American officials who have thus favored my research, I will cite above all Mr. Edward Livingston, the Secretary of State (now ambassador plenipotentiary to Paris). During my stay at the Congress, Mr. Livingston was nice enough to have sent to me most of the documents that I possess relating to the federal government. Mr. Livingston is one of those rare men whom you like by reading their writings, whom you admire and honor even before knowing them and to whom you are happy to owe acknowledgement.*[s]

s. This note does not appear in the manuscript of the book and no reference to it is found in the other papers of Tocqueville. At the end of the year 1834, Livingston was in Paris in a very delicate situation because of the famous affair of the American indemnities. It is possible that the note had been written in sympathy with the man whose name appears several times in the drafts as a source of information. On the affair of the indemnities and Edward Livingston, see Richard A. McLemore, *Franco-American Diplomatic Relations, 1816–1836* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941).

to the list of those travelers who send sorrows and troubles in return for the generous hospitality that they received.

I know that, despite my care, nothing will be easier than to criticize this book, if anyone ever thinks to examine it critically.

Those who will want to look closely at it will find, I think, in the entire work, a generative thought that links so to speak all its parts. But the diversity of the subjects that I had to treat is very great, and whoever will undertake to contrast an isolated fact to the whole of the facts that I cite, a detached idea to the whole of the ideas, will succeed without difficulty. So I would like you to grant me the favor of reading me with the same spirit that presided over my work, and would like you to judge this book by the general impression that it leaves, as I myself came to a decision, not due to a particular reason, but due to the mass of reasons.

Nor must it be forgotten that the author who wants to make himself understood is obliged to push each of his ideas to all of their theoretical consequences, and often to the limits of what is false and impractical;[t] for if it is sometimes necessary to step back from the rules of logic in actions, you cannot do the same in discourses, and man finds it almost as difficult to be inconsistent in his words as he normally finds it to be consistent in his actions. [<This, to say in passing, brings out one of the great advantages of free governments, an advantage about which you scarcely think. In these

t. Tocqueville is eager to emphasize that the goal of his book is the description of models, of *ideal types* that, by definition, do not perfectly coincide with reality. He probably borrows the concept from Montesquieu, even if from Montesquieu to Tocqueville, and later to Max Weber, differences are perceptible. The use of the idea of ideal types (aristocracy and democracy) is of a hermeneutical nature; all attempts to make it a mechanical and automatic process would destroy one of the most remarkable aspects of Tocqueville's theory. For the latter, the good political regime is characterized by an eternal tension between the two types, idea that points at the very same time to Pascal and to the romanticism of the period. (See in this regard Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophie positive,* lesson 47; Emile Durkheim, *Montesquieu et Rousseau, précurseurs de la sociologie,* Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1953, ch. III; Melvin Richter, "Comparative Political Analysis in Montesquieu and Tocqueville," *Comparative Politics* 1, no. 2 (1969): 129–60; Pierre Birnbaum, *Sociologie de Tocqueville,* Paris: PUF, 1970, pp. 29–39; Gianfranco Poggi, *Images of Society,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972, pp. 2–82). Cf. note m of p. 694 of volume III.

governments, it is necessary to talk a great deal. The need to talk forces men of State to reason, and from speeches a bit of logic is introduced into public affairs.>]

I finish by pointing out myself what a great number of readers[u] will consider as the capital defect of the work.[v] This book follows in no one's train exactly; by writing it I did not mean either to serve or to combat any party; I set about to see, not differently, but farther than parties;[w] and while they are concerned with the next day, I wanted to think about the future.[x]

u. In the manuscript: ". . . what most readers . . ."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "You must not put *most readers.* That would shock them because you seem to doubt their intelligence too much. So put *some readers* in place of *most readers.*

Édouard de Tocqueville (?): "Very right" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 19–20).

v. In the margin: "≠Why I have not put many figures and statistics. Change so rapidly. Insignificant.≠"

w. "I believe what I say, only advantage that I have over most of my contemporaries. Nothing more common than to talk of liberty, but nearly everyone wants something more or less than liberty. But I really love it and want it" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 97).

"I am sure that my subject does not lack grandeur. If I fail it will be my fault and not the fault of my subject. In any case, I will have pointed out the path" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 98).

x. "To point out if possible to men what to do to escape tyranny and debasement while becoming *democratic.* Such is, I think, the general idea by which my book can be summarized and which will appear on every page of the one I am writing at this moment. To work in this direction is, in my eyes, a *holy* occupation and one for which you must spare neither your money, nor your time, nor your life," writes Tocqueville to Kergorlay. 26 December 1836 (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 431–32).

CHAPTER I

Exterior Configuration of North America

North America divided into two vast regions, the one descending toward the pole, the other toward the equator.—Valley of the Mississippi.—Traces found there of global upheavals.—Coast of the Atlantic Ocean where the English colonies were founded.—Different appearance that South America and North America presented at the time of discovery.—Forests of North America.—Prairies.—Wandering tribes of natives.—Their outward appearance, their mores, their languages.—Traces of an unknown people.

North America, in its exterior configuration, presents general features that are easy to distinguish at first glance.

A kind of methodical order presided over the separation of land and waterways, mountains and valleys. A simple and majestic arrangement is revealed even in the midst of the confusion of objects and among the extreme variety of scenes.

Two vast regions divide North America almost equally.*

One is limited, in the North, by the Arctic pole; in the East, in the West, by the two great oceans. Then it advances southward and forms a triangle whose sides, irregularly drawn, finally meet below the Great Lakes of Canada.

* See the map placed at the end of the volume. [See volume II, following p. 687. This map was deleted after the first editions. (ed.)]

The second begins where the first finishes and extends over the entire remainder of the continent.

The one inclines slightly toward the pole; the other, toward the equator.

The lands included in the first region descend toward the north in a slope so slight that they could almost be said to form a plateau. In the interior of this immense flatland, there are neither high mountains nor deep valleys.

There the waterways wind as if haphazardly. The rivers mingle, join together, part, meet again, vanish in a thousand swamps, are lost continually within a watery labyrinth that they have created, and only after innumerable twists and turns do they finally reach the polar seas. The Great Lakes, where this first region terminates, are not, like most of the lakes of the Old World, steeply embanked by hills and rocks; their shores are flat and rise only a few feet above sea level. So each of them forms something like a vast basin filled to the brim: the slightest changes in the structure of the globe would hurl their waters toward either the pole or the tropical sea.

The second region is more uneven and better prepared to become the permanent dwelling place of man; two long mountain ranges divide it along its length: one, named the Allegheny Mountains, follows the shores of the Atlantic Ocean; the other parallels the Pacific Ocean.

The space enclosed between these two mountain ranges includes 228,843 square leagues.[1] So its area is about six times greater than that of France.[2]

Yet this vast territory forms only a single valley that descends from the rounded summits of the Allegheny Mountains, and, without meeting any obstacles, climbs again to the peaks of the Rocky Mountains.

At the bottom of the valley flows an immense river. From all directions, waterways descending from the mountains are seen to rush toward it.

1. *1,341,649 miles. See* Darby's View of the United States, *p. 469. I have converted miles into leagues of 2,000* toises.[a]

a. A *toise* equals 1,949 millimeters.

2. *France measures 35,181 square leagues.*

Formerly the French called it the Saint Louis River, in memory of the absent homeland; and the Indians, in their pompous language, named it the Father of Waters, or the Mississippi.

The Mississippi has its source at the boundaries of the two great regions that I spoke about above, near the top of the plateau that separates them.

Near the source of the Mississippi another river[3] arises that empties into the polar seas. Sometimes even the Mississippi seems uncertain of the path it should take; several times it retraces its steps, and only after slowing its pace amidst lakes and marshes does it finally settle upon its route and set its course slowly toward the south.

Sometimes calm within the clayey bed that nature has dug for it, sometimes swollen by storms, the Mississippi waters more than a thousand leagues along its way.[4]

Six hundred leagues[5] above its mouth, the river already has an average depth of 15 feet, and vessels of 300 tons go up for a distance of nearly two hundred leagues.

Fifty-seven large navigable rivers flow into it. The tributaries of the Mississippi include a river with a length of 1,300 leagues,[6] one of 900,[7] one of 600,[8] one of 500,[9] four of 200,[10] without considering an innumerable multitude of streams that rush from all directions to become lost within it.

The valley watered by the Mississippi seems to have been created for it alone; there the river dispenses good and evil at will, and seems like a god. Near the river, nature displays an inexhaustible fecundity. As you move away from its banks, plant energies fail; the soil thins; everything languishes

3. *The Red River.*

4. *2,500 miles, 1,032 leagues. See* Description of the United States, *by Warden, vol. I, p. 166.*

5. *1,364 miles, 563 leagues. See* id., *vol. I, p. 169.*

6. *The Missouri. See* id., *vol. I, p. 132 (1,278 leagues).*

7. *The Arkansas. See* id., *vol. I, p. 188 (897 leagues).*

8. *The Red River. See* id., *vol. I, p. 190 (598 leagues).*

9. *The Ohio. See* id., *vol. I, p. 192 (490 leagues).*

10. *The Illinois, the Saint Peter [the Minnesota (ed.)], the Saint Francis, the Des Moines.*

In the measurements above, I have taken as a measure the legal mile (statute mile) *and the postal league of 2,000 toises.*

or dies. Nowhere have the great convulsions of the earth left clearer traces than in the Mississippi Valley. The whole appearance of the country attests to the action of water. Its sterility, like its abundance, is the work of water. At the bottom of the valley, the waves of the early ocean built up huge layers of vegetable matter and then wore them down over time. On the right bank of the river you find immense plains, made smooth like the surface of a field worked over by the farmworker's roller. In contrast, the closer you get to the mountains, the more and more broken and sterile the ground becomes; the soil is pierced, so to speak, in a thousand places; and here and there primitive rocks appear, like the bones of a skeleton after time has consumed the surrounding muscles and flesh. Granite sand and stones of irregular size cover the surface of the earth; the shoots of a few plants grow with great difficulty among these obstacles; it seems like a fertile field covered by the ruins of some vast edifice. By analyzing these stones and this sand, it is in fact easy to notice a perfect analogy between their materials and those that form the dry and broken peaks of the Rocky Mountains. After pushing the earth headlong into the bottom of the valley, the water almost certainly ended up carrying along a portion of the rocks themselves; it rolled them along the nearest slopes; and, after grinding them against each other, it scattered these fragments, torn from the summits, at the base of the mountains.[b] A

All in all, the Mississippi Valley is the most magnificent dwelling place ever prepared by God for human habitation;[c] and yet, it can be said that it is still only a vast wilderness.[d]

On the eastern slope of the Allegheny Mountains, between the foot of the mountains and the Atlantic Ocean, stretches a long band of rocks and

b. In the margin: "≠For more exactitude in this picture consult and *cite* Volney. Examination of trees, nature of lands, shape of the country.≠"

c. "The general population doubles in 22 years, that of the Mississippi Valley in 10 years. 3.25% for the whole, 5% in the valley. Darby, p. 446, calculates that in 1865 the preponderance will be in the Mississippi Valley" (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 63).

d. Here Tocqueville tries to convey the sense of the English word *wilderness,* for which Beaumont had proposed *sauvagerie.* For him, throughout his book, *désert* designates the virgin forest, unexplored and not cultivated. See Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind,* New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1973, pp. 1–7.

sand that the sea seems to have forgotten as it withdrew. This territory is, on average, only 48 leagues wide,[11] but it is 390 leagues long.[12] The soil, in this part of the American continent, lends itself to cultivation only with difficulty. Vegetation there is sparse and uniform.

On this inhospitable coast the efforts of human industry were first concentrated. On this strip of arid land were born and grew the English colonies, which would one day become the United States of America. Still today the center of power is found there, while behind, almost in secret, gather the true elements of a great people to whom the future of the continent no doubt belongs.

When Europeans landed on the shores of the Antilles and later on the coasts of South America, they thought themselves transported into the fabled regions celebrated by poets.[e] The sea sparkled with the fiery glow of the tropics. For the first time, the extraordinary transparency of the waters exposed the depth of the ocean bottom to the eyes of the navigator.[13] Here and there small perfumed islands appeared, seeming to float like baskets of flowers on the calm surface of the Ocean. In these enchanted places, all that came into view seemed prepared for the needs of man or planned for his pleasures. Most of the trees were laden with nourishing fruits, and those least useful to man charmed his vision with the vividness and variety of their colors. In a forest of fragrant lemon trees, of wild figs, of myrtle oaks, of acacias and of oleanders, all intertwined by flowering creepers, a multitude of birds unknown in Europe flashed their wings of crimson and

11. *100 miles.*

12. *About 900 miles.*

e. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Alexis thinks correctly that the description of South America must be shortened a great deal, perhaps even removed entirely. 1. Because he was not there. 2. Because South America is entirely outside of his subject" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 45).

13. *The waters are so transparent in the Caribbean Sea, says Malte-Brun, vol. V, p. 726, that corals and fish are distinguishable at a depth of 60 fathoms. The ship seems to glide on air; a kind of vertigo grips the traveler whose view plunges beyond the crystalline fluid into the midst of underground gardens where shellfish and gilded fish shimmer among the clumps of fucus and the thickets of marine algae.*

azure and mingled the chorus of their songs with the harmonies of a nature full of movement and life.[f B]

Death was hidden under this brilliant cloak; but it was not noticed at all at that time. Moreover, in the air of these regions, there reigned I do not know what enervating influence, attaching man to the present and rendering him unmindful of the future.

North America presented another appearance; everything there was grave, serious, solemn. You could have said that it had been created to become the domain of the mind, as the other was to be the dwelling place of the senses.

A turbulent and foggy ocean enveloped its coasts; granite rocks or sandy shores girdled it; the forests that covered its banks displayed a somber and melancholy foliage; hardly anything other than pine, larch, holm oak, wild olive and laurel grew there.

After penetrating this first barrier, people entered into the shade of the central forest; there the largest trees that grow in the two hemispheres were found mixed together. The plane tree, catalpa, sugar maple, and Virginia poplar [eastern poplar][*] intertwined their branches with those of the oak, the beech and the linden.

As in forests subjected to the dominion of man, death struck here without respite; but no one took responsibility for clearing the remains that death had caused. So they piled up; time could not reduce them to dust

f. In the manuscript: "The objects that caught the eye in these enchanted places appeared destined to satisfy needs or to give rise to pleasures. Most of the trees produced fruits; and all of them, flowers. (The wild fig, the lemon tree, the myrtle oak and the oleander grew in dense groves. The acacia arose from the middle of the beach and scattered its fragrant remains over the shores.

The bignonias, the granadillas [passion fruit], the acacias with large pods, fifty species of creepers were thrown as) species of garlands thrown from tree to tree or branch to branch, repeating the image of the works of man in the middle of the inimitable charms of nature. A multitude of birds unknown to Europe made these flowery arches and domes of greenery sparkle with their many colors. There you heard resounding from all directions the sound of a thousand living creatures.

Death was . . ."

The published version is in Gustave de Beaumont's hand (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 42–43). See note e supra, in which Tocqueville's desire to shorten this description is clear.

[*]. See *Tableau des Etats-Unis,* by Volney, p. 9.

quickly enough to prepare new places. But in the very midst of these remains, the work of reproduction went on without ceasing. Climbing plants and weeds of all types grew up through the obstacles; they crept along the fallen tree trunks, wormed into their dust, lifted up and broke the withered bark that still covered them, and cleared a path for their young offshoots. Thus, in a way, death there came to the aid of life. They were face to face, and seemed to want to mix and mingle their work.[g]

These forests concealed a profound darkness. A thousand small streams, not yet channeled by human effort, maintained an unending humidity. Scarcely any flowers, wild fruits, or any birds were seen.

Only the fall of a tree toppled by age, the cataract of a river, the bellowing of the buffalo and the whistling of the winds disturbed the silence of nature.[h]

East of the great river, the woods partially disappeared; in their place spread limitless prairies. Had nature, in its infinite variety, denied the seeds of trees to these fertile fields, or had the forest that once covered them been destroyed long ago by the hand of man? This is something that neither tradition nor scientific research has been able to discover.

These immense wilderness areas were not entirely without the presence of man however; for centuries, a few small tribes wandered in the shade of the forest or across the prairie lands. From the mouth of the Saint Lawrence to the delta of the Mississippi, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, these savages shared certain similarities that testified to their common origin. But they also differed from all known races.[14] They were neither white like the

g. Cf. *Journey to Lake Oneida,* pp. 1295–1302, in the fourth volume.

h. In this paragraph as in the preceding one, Tocqueville took into account the stylistic modifications suggested by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 44).

14. *Some similarities have since been discovered between the physical structure, the language and the habits of the Indians of North America and those of the Tungus, Manchus, Mongols, Tartars and other nomadic tribes of Asia. The latter occupy a position near the Bering Strait, which allows the supposition that, at a period long ago, they were able to come to people the empty American continent. But science has not yet succeeded in clarifying this*

Europeans, nor yellow like most of the Asians, nor black like the Negroes. Their skin was reddish; their hair, long and lustrous; their lips, thin; and their cheekbones, very prominent. The languages spoken by the savage tribes of America differed from each other in words, but all were bound by the same grammatical rules. On several points, these rules deviated from those that, until then, had seemed to govern the formation of human language.

The idiom of the Americans seemed to result from new combinations; it indicated on the part of its inventors an exercise of intelligence of which the Indians of today seem little capable.[C]

The social state of these peoples also differed in several respects from what was seen in the Old World: it could have been said that they multiplied freely in their wilderness, without contact with more civilized races. So among them, you found none of those doubtful and incoherent notions of good and evil, none of that profound corruption which is usually combined with ignorance and crudeness of mores among civilized nations who have descended into barbarism again. The Indian owed nothing to anyone except himself. His virtues, his vices, his prejudices were his own work; he grew up in the wild independence of his own nature.

The coarseness of common men, in civilized countries, comes not only from their ignorance and poverty, but also from their daily contact, as ignorant and poor men, with those who are enlightened and rich.

The sight of their misfortune and weakness, which is in daily contrast to the good fortune and power of certain of their fellows, excites anger and fear simultaneously in their heart; the feeling of their inferiority and dependence irritates and humiliates them. This inner state of soul is reproduced in their mores, as well as in their language; at the very same time, they are insolent and servile.

point. On this question, see Malte-Brun, vol. V; the works of Humboldt; Fischer, Conjectures sur l'origine des Américains; *Adair,* History of the American Indians.

The truth of this is easily proved by observation. The people are more coarse in aristocratic countries than anywhere else, and in opulent cities more than in the countryside.[j]

In these places, where men so rich and powerful are found, the weak and poor feel as though overwhelmed by their low condition; finding no point by which they can regain equality, they completely lose hope in themselves and allow themselves to fall below the dignity of human nature.

This unfortunate effect of the contrast in conditions is not found in savage life; the Indians, at the same time that they are all ignorant and poor, are all equal and free.[k]

At the time of the arrival of the Europeans, the native of North America was still unaware of the value of wealth and showed himself indifferent to the material well-being that civilized man obtains from it. He exhibited no coarseness however; on the contrary, an habitual reserve and a kind of aristocratic courtesy governed the way he behaved.

In peace, mild and hospitable, in war, merciless even beyond the known limits of human ferocity, the Indian risked death by starvation in order to aid a stranger who knocked at night on the door of his hut and, with his own hands, tore apart the quivering limbs of his prisoner. The most famous republics of antiquity never admired firmer courage, prouder souls, a more uncompromising love of independence than what was then hidden in the

j. Hervé de Tocqueville: "This entire paragraph is well thought out and strikingly true. But isn't it a little long? You could perhaps delete the section from the words cited above [*The truth of this,* etc. . . . (ed.)] to these: *This unfortunate effect.* It seems to me that the expression of the thought would gain in precision."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "This thought is excellent. I do not know what must be deleted or cut, but it seems to me that you must revise and rework this entire passage, perfect in thought and uneven and not very refined in style" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 46). Nonetheless, Tocqueville did not modify the passage, identical in the manuscript and in the published version.

k. Note in the margin: "≠Idea of K[ergorlay (ed.)]. What makes the lower classes coarse is contact with the upper classes and the feeling of their low condition. All the savages are equal and free.≠"

wild forests of the New World.[15] The Europeans made only a small impression when landing on the shores of North America; their presence gave rise to neither envy nor fear. What hold could they have over such men? The Indian knew how to live without needs, how to suffer without complaint, and how to die singing.[16] Like all the other members of the great human family, moreover, these savages believed in the existence of a better world, and under different names worshipped God, creator of the universe. Their notions about the great intellectual truths were generally simple and philosophical.[D]

15. *Among the Iroquois, attacked by superior forces, says President Jefferson (*Notes sur la Virginie, *p. 148), one saw old men disdain to flee or to outlive the destruction of their country and to brave death, like the old Romans during the sack of Rome by the Gauls. Further along, p. 150: "There never was an instance known, he says, of an Indian begging his life when in the power of his enemies; on the contrary, that he courts death by every possible insult and provocation."*

[Documents on the Indians./

See the work entitled Historical Collections of the Indians in New England, *by Daniel Gookin, printed in 1792. It is found in the historical collections of Massachusetts, vol. 1, p. 141 [–226 (ed.)].*

Gookin says that there are people who believe that the Indians are the descendents of the ten tribes of Israel, which explains the state of barbarism and darkness in which they are found. "But this opinion [. . . (ed.) . . .], says Gookin, doth not greatly obtain. [But (ed.)] surely it is not impossible and perhaps not so improbable as many learned men think" [p. 145 (ed.)].

See as well a work entitled Key into the Language of the Indians of New England *by Roger Williams, printed in London in 1643. It is found reprinted in the collection of the historical society of Massachusetts, vol. 3, p. 203 [–238 (ed.)].]*

16. *See* Histoire de la Louisiane, *by Lepage-Dupratz; Charlevoix,* Histoire de la Nouvelle France; *Letters of R. Hecwelder [Heckewelder (ed.)],* Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, *vol. I [the* Voyages du baron de la Hontan; General History of Virginia, *by Captain John Smith;* id., *by Beverley;* History of Carolina, *by John Lawson; and* History of New York, *by William Smith];*[m] *Jefferson,* Notes sur la Virginie, *pp. 135–90. What Jefferson says carries an especially great weight, because of the personal merit of the writer, of his particular position and of the positive and exact century in which he wrote.*

[{Perhaps put in a note here the most striking features of this portrait and the discourse of Logan.}]

m. These works, included only in certain editions, do not appear at this place in the manuscript. They are, however, cited elsewhere.

Yet, no matter how primitive the people whose character we are describing may appear, it cannot be doubted that they had been preceded in the same regions by another people, more civilized and advanced in all ways.

An obscure tradition, but one widespread among most of the Indian tribes along the Atlantic coast, teaches us that long ago the dwelling place of these very bands was located west of the Mississippi. Mounds raised by human hands are still found every day along the banks of the Ohio and throughout the central valley. We are told that when you dig into the center of these monuments, you hardly ever fail to find human bones, strange instruments, weapons, implements of all sorts that are made of a metal or that recall uses unknown to the present races.[n]

The Indians of today can give no information at all about the history of this unknown people. Nor did those who lived three hundred years ago, at the time of the discovery of America, say anything from which even an hypothesis could be inferred. Traditions, those perishable and constantly recurring memorials of the primitive world, furnish no light whatsoever. It cannot be doubted, however, that thousands of people similar to us lived there. When did they come there; what was their origin, their destiny, their history? When and how did they perish? No one could say.

Strange thing! Some peoples have so completely disappeared from the earth that even the memory of their name has been blotted out; their languages are lost; their glory has faded like a sound without an echo. But I do not know if there is even one who has not at least left one tomb to mark its passage. Thus, of all the works of man, the most durable is still the one that best recounts his nothingness and his woes!

Although the vast country just described was inhabited by numerous tribes of natives, you could justly say that, at the time of discovery, it was still only a wilderness. The Indians occupied, but did not possess it. Man appropriates the soil by agriculture, and the first inhabitants of North America lived by the hunt. Their implacable prejudices, their untamed pas-

n. Cf. Conversation with Mr. Houston, December 31, 1831 (Notebook E, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 264). This fragment also recalls the "journal sans date" of the *Voyage en Amérique* of Chateaubriand (*Oeuvres romanesques et voyages,* Paris: Pléiade, 1969, I, pp. 710–13).

sions, their vices, and perhaps even more their wild virtues delivered them to an inevitable destruction. The ruin of these people began the day Europeans landed on their shores; it has continued constantly since then; today it reaches completion. Providence, while placing them in the midst of the riches of the New World, seemed to have given them only a short usufruct; in a way, these people were there only *waiting.* These coasts, so well prepared for commerce and industry; these rivers, so deep; this inexhaustible Mississippi Valley; this entire continent, appeared at that time as the still empty cradle of a great nation.[o]

That is where civilized men had to try to build society on new foundations. Applying, for the first time, theories until then unknown or considered inapplicable, civilized men were going to present a spectacle for which past history had not prepared the world.[p]

o. Cf. *A Fortnight in the Wilderness* (appendix II, especially p. 1354 of the fourth volume).

p. In this place are found remarks on the Governor, reproduced in note b of pp. 140–42.

CHAPTER 2

Of the Point of Departure and Its Importance for the Future of the Anglo-Americans[a]

Usefulness of knowing the point of departure of peoples in order to understand their social state and their laws.—America is the only country where the point of departure of a great people could clearly be seen.—How all the men who came to populate English America were similar.—How they differed.—Remark applicable to all the Europeans who came to settle on the shores of the New World.—Colonization of Virginia.—Id. of New England.—Original character of the first inhabitants of New England.—Their arrival.—Their first laws.—Social contract.—Penal code taken from the law of Moses.—Religious fervor.—Republican spirit.—Intimate union of the spirit of religion and the spirit of liberty.

A man is newly born; his first years pass obscurely amid the pleasures or occupations of childhood. He grows up; manhood begins; finally the doors

a. *Point of departure./*
Influence of the point of departure on the future of society.
Homogeneous ideas, mores, needs, passions of the founders of American society.
Influence of the extent of the territory, of the nature of the country, of its geographic situation, of its ports, of its population, immigration from Europe, and in the West, from America itself.
The point of departure gave birth to the society as it is organized today, *primitive fact* after which come the consequences, formulated as principles (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 23).

of the world open to receive him; he enters into contact with his fellow men. Then, for the first time, you study him and think that the seeds of the vices and virtues of his mature years can be seen developing in him.[b]

If I am not mistaken, that is a great error.[c]

Go back to the beginning; examine the child even in the arms of his mother; see the exterior world reflected for the first time in the still dark mirror of his intellect; contemplate the first examples that catch his eye; listen to the first words that awaken his slumbering powers of thought; finally, witness the first struggles that he has to sustain. And only then will you understand the origin of the prejudices, the habits and the passions that are going to dominate his life. The whole man is there, so to speak, in the infant swaddled in his cradle.

Something similar happens among nations. Peoples always feel the effects of their origin. The circumstances that accompanied their birth and were useful to their development influence all the rest of their course.

If it were possible for us to go back to the elements of societies and examine the first memorials of their history, I am certain that we would be able to discover there the first cause of the prejudices, habits, dominant passions, of all that ultimately composes what is called the national character. [{There, no doubt, we would find the key to more than one historical enigma}]. There we would happen to find the explanation for customs that today seem contrary to the reigning mores; for laws that seem opposed to recognized principles; for incoherent opinions found here and there in society like fragments of broken chains that are sometimes seen still hanging

b. In the margin: "≠It must be very much remembered that this chapter still requires research on the laws of New England, Massachusetts, Rhode Island. See especially the *Town Officer* [Isaac Goodwin, *Town Officer: or Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Duties of Municipal Officers,* second edition, Worcester: Dorr and Howland, 1829. (ed.)].≠"

c. In the margin:

≠Point common to all parts of the Union.
South.
West.
North. New England, sun, which is the source of all the rays that heat, light or at least color everything else.≠

from the vaults of an old edifice and that no longer hold up anything. Thus would be explained the destiny of certain peoples who seem to be dragged by an unknown force toward an end unknown even to themselves. But until now facts have been lacking for such a study. The spirit of analysis came to nations only as they grew older, and when, at last, they thought to contemplate their birth, time had already enveloped it in a mist; ignorance and pride had surrounded it with fables that hid the truth.

[Human remains are said to volatilize after death. Separated from each other, these human molecules are incorporated with other living substances. Each of us can therefore consider himself as the summary of many other individuals of the same species who have lived before him. An analogous phenomenon occurs again in the history of the formation of peoples. Moreover, since the time when the various human races began to succeed one another and to graft together, what people of the Old World is not today composed of the remnants of older nations? It is true that, in place of peoples who have ceased to exist, we have seen new peoples arise who have borrowed something from each of their precursors. From this one, its tongue; from that one, its laws; from another, its mores; from a fourth, certain opinions and prejudices. Because these elements already exist, only their combination is new. Amid all this debris of societies that slides haphazardly over the earth, there is no one who could now recapture an original type, or who would dare to trace how time has subjected an original type to changes by combining it with strange elements. Science, in such a labyrinth, provides only incomplete conclusions and vague hypotheses.]

America is the only country where we have been able to witness the natural and tranquil development of a society and where it has been possible to clarify the influence that the point of departure exercised on the future of States.[d]

d. Tocqueville seems not to have been satisfied with the draft of this paragraph. At the time of the correction of proofs in October 1834, he writes expressly to Beaumont to ask him what he thinks of it (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 144). Two corrections concerning the style were certainly suggested by Beaumont (the original version said *discern the influence* and spoke only of *tranquil development*). In relation to the same subject, Tocqueville notes in a rough draft:

At the time when European peoples descended upon the shores of the New World, the features of their national character were already well fixed; each of them had a distinct physiognomy. And since they had already reached the level of civilization that leads men to self-study, they have handed down to us a faithful picture of their opinions, mores, and laws. The men of the fifteenth century are almost as well-known to us as those of our own. So America shows us in full light what the ignorance and the barbarism of the first ages concealed from our view.

Close enough to the era of the founding of the American societies to know their elements in detail, far enough from that time to be able already to judge what these seeds produced, men in our time seem destined to see further into human events than their predecessors. Providence has put within our reach a light that our fathers lacked and has allowed us to discern the first causes of the destiny of nations that the obscurity of the past hid from them.

When, after attentively studying the history of America, you carefully

When the earth was given to man by the Creator, it was young, fertile, inexhaustible, but man was weak and ignorant. When he had learned to make use of the treasures that the earth enclosed in its bosom, he already covered the entire surface of the land, and he had to fight to acquire the right to have a refuge and to rest there. Then he was civilized, but the earth, like him, was old . . . Such was not the (illegible word) destiny of the men who in the fourteenth [*sic*] century found America. For them this land was like a new creation of a new universe suddenly emerging from the sea, all shining with life, youth and spring-like beauty. This new creation was being offered not to the isolated, ignorant and barbaric man of the first ages, but to men already (illegible word) with all the secrets of nature and art, united among themselves and entrusted with a civilization of fifty centuries (The copyist indicates that this page is not in the handwriting of Alexis de Tocqueville. YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 50–51).

In America Tocqueville found the history of the establishment of a people that Rousseau lacked:

In general, the most instructive part of the annals of peoples, which is the history of their establishment, is what we lack the most. Experience teaches us every day which causes give birth to the revolutions of empires, but because peoples are no longer being formed, we have hardly anything except conjectures to explain how they were formed (*Du contrat social, Œuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, I, book IV, chapter IV, p. 444).

examine its political and social state, you feel deeply convinced of this truth: there is not an opinion, not a habit, not a law, I could say not an event, that the point of departure does not easily explain. So those who read this book will find in the present chapter the germ of what must follow and the key to nearly the whole book.[e]

The emigrants who came at different times to occupy the territory that the American Union covers today differed from each other in many ways; their aim was not the same, and they governed themselves according to various principles.

These men shared common features, however, and they all found themselves in an analogous situation.

The bond of language is perhaps the strongest and most durable that can unite men. All the emigrants spoke the same language; they were all children of the same people. They were born in a country troubled, for centuries, by the struggle of parties, and where the factions had been obliged, one by one, to place themselves under the protection of the laws. Their political education was shaped in this rude school, and you saw more notions of rights, more principles of true liberty spread among them than among most of the peoples of Europe. At the time of the first migrations, town government, this fertile seed of free institutions, had already entered

e. Circumstances without number, theory to make.

Point of departure. The most important of all in my eyes, because it is the one that has had the most influence on mores; I regard mores as by far the most powerful of the three general causes. Equality. Democracy introduced in germ. *Comfort,* result of the small population and the immense resources of the country.

Emigration, new resources equal to new needs.

The absence of neighbors, no war, no permanent army.

New country, no large cities, no manufacturing districts, no capital. *Men are not pressed* one against the other; popular movements less electric and less destructive./

It is a land that presents itself with all the strength and fertility of youth.

The discovery of America is like the complement of creation.

America.

In this state it is presented to man, not to the ignorant and barbaric man of the first centuries of the world, but to man already educated by an experience of 6,000 years (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 20–21).

deeply into English habits; and with it, the dogma of the sovereignty of the people was introduced even within the Tudor monarchy.

People were then in the middle of the religious quarrels that troubled the Christian world. England had thrown itself into this new course with a sort of fury. The character of the inhabitants, which had always been grave and thoughtful, had become austere and argumentative. These intellectual struggles had greatly increased education and had stimulated deeper cultivation of the mind. While people were occupied with talk of religion, mores became more pure. All these general features of the nation were found more or less in the physiognomy of those of its sons who had come to seek a new future on the opposite shores of the ocean.

Moreover, a remark, which we will have the occasion to return to later, is applicable not only to the English but also to the French, to the Spanish, and to all the Europeans who came successively to settle the shores of the New World. All the new European colonies contained, if not the development, at least the germ, of a complete democracy. Two causes led to this result. [Among the emigrants, unlike in the old societies of Europe, neither conquerors nor conquered were seen.] It can be said in general, that, at their departure from the mother country, the emigrants had no idea whatsoever of any kind of superiority of some over others. It is hardly the happy and the powerful who go into exile, and poverty as well as misfortune are the best guarantees of equality that are known among men. It happened, however, that on several occasions great lords went to America following political or religious quarrels. Laws were made in order to establish a hierarchy of ranks there, but it was soon noticed that the American soil absolutely rejected territorial aristocracy. To clear that intractable land nothing less was required than the constant and interested efforts of the proprietor himself. The ground prepared, it was found that production was not great enough to enrich both a master and a tenant at the same time. So the land was naturally divided into small estates that the proprietor cultivated alone.[f] Now, aristocracy clings to the land; it is attached to the soil and relies upon the soil for support. It is not privileges alone that establish it; it is not birth

f. In the margin: "Put the details of this idea further along at democracy."

that constitutes it; it is landed property handed down by inheritance. A nation may exhibit immense fortunes and great misery; but if these fortunes are not territorial, you see poor and rich in its bosom; truly speaking, there is no aristocracy.[g]

So all the English colonies, at the time of their birth, shared a great family resemblance. All, from their beginning, seemed destined to present the development of liberty, not the aristocratic liberty of their mother country, but the bourgeois and democratic liberty of which the history of the world did not yet offer a complete model.[h]

Noticeable in the midst of this general coloration, however, were some very strong nuances that must be pointed out.

In the great Anglo-American family, two principal branches can be distinguished, one in the South, one in the North; until now, they have grown up without being completely merged.

Virginia received the first English colony. The emigrants arrived there in 1607. At this time, Europe was still singularly preoccupied with the idea that mines of gold and silver constituted the wealth of peoples. This destructive idea has done more to impoverish the European nations that embraced it and, in America, has destroyed more men than war and all bad laws put together. So it was gold seekers who were sent to Virginia,[1] men without resources and without proper behavior, whose restless and turbulent spirit troubled the early years of the colony[2] and made its progress

g. To the side, with a bracket that includes the last three sentences of the paragraph: "{Hasn't this been said a hundred times?}"

h. In the margin: "≠The great point of view of America is the development of democracy≠"

1. *The charter granted by the English crown in 1609 included, among others, the clause that the colonists would pay one-fifth of the production of gold and silver mines to the crown. See* Life of Washington, *by Marshall, vol. I, pp. 18–66.*

2. *A great portion of the new settlers, says Stith (*History of Virginia *) [pp. 167–68 (ed.)], were dissolute young men of good families, shipped off by their relatives to save them from an ignominious fate. Former servants, fraudulent bankrupts, the debauched, and other people of this type, more appropriate for pillage and destruction than for consolidating the settlement, formed the rest. Seditious leaders easily led this troop into all sorts of extravagances and excesses. See, relative to the history of Virginia, the following works:*

uncertain. Afterwards came the manufacturers and farmers, a more moral and quieter breed, but one that in hardly any ways rose above the level of the lower classes of England.[3] No noble thought, no plans that were not material, directed the foundation of these new establishments. The colony was scarcely established before slavery was introduced there;[4] that was the capital fact that would exercise an immense influence on the character, the laws and the entire future of the South.

Slavery, as we will explain later, dishonors work; into society, it introduces idleness, along with ignorance and pride, poverty and luxury. It enervates the forces of the mind and puts human activity to sleep. The influence of slavery, combined with the English character, explains the mores and the social state [{the character}] of the South.[j]

[≠Even the outward appearance of the settlers assumed the imprint of the habits of their life. The Virginian race is recognizable everywhere by its height and by the air of nobility and command that prevails among its features.≠]

In the North, completely opposite nuances were painted on this same English background. Allow me some details here.

In the English colonies of the North, better known as the New England states,[5] were combined the two or three principal ideas that today form the foundations of the social theory of the United States.

The principles of New England first spread into neighboring states;

History of Virginia from the First Settlements to the Year 1624, *by Smith.*

History of Virginia, *by William Stith.*

History of Virginia from the Earliest Period, *by Beverley, translated into French in 1707.*

3. *It is only later that a certain number of rich English proprietors came to settle in the colony.*

4. *Slavery was introduced about the year 1620 by a Dutch vessel that disembarked twenty Negroes on the banks of the James River. See Chalmer.*

j. In the travel notes and early drafts, as well as in the first drafts of the manuscript, Tocqueville's thinking tends to be oriented toward a North-South division of the United States. This understanding is modified further, particularly following the observations made by his family. Compare this note with note h of p. 77 and p. 602.

5. *The states of New England are those situated east of the Hudson; today they number six: 1. Connecticut; 2. Rhode Island; 3. Massachusetts; 4. Vermont; 5. New Hampshire; 6. Maine.*

then, one by one, they reached the most distant states and finished, if I can express myself in this way, by *penetrating* the entire confederation. Now they exercise their influence beyond its limits, over the entire American world. The civilization of New England has been like those fires kindled on the hilltops that, after spreading warmth around them, light the farthest bounds of the horizon with their brightness.

The founding of New England offered a new spectacle; everything there was singular and original.

[≠You would search the entire history of humanity in vain for an event that presented some analogy to what we are describing.[k]≠]

Nearly all colonies have had as first inhabitants either men without education and without resources, who were pushed out of the country where they had been born by poverty and misconduct, or avid speculators and business agents. There are some colonies that cannot claim even such an origin. Santo Domingo was founded by pirates; and today the English courts of justice are in charge of peopling Australia.[m]

The emigrants who came to settle the shores of New England all belonged to the comfortable classes of the mother country. Their gathering on American soil presented, from the beginning, the singular phenomenon of a society in which there were neither great lords,[n] nor lower classes, neither poor, nor rich, so to speak. [I have already said that, among the Europeans who went to America, conditions were in general largely equal, but it can be said that, in a way, these emigrants {the Puritans} carried democracy even within democracy.] In proportion, there was a greater amount of

k. In the margin: "≠Their birth has no more precedents in world history than the social and political state that we see among them today.≠"

m. To the side: "≠Union of liberty and of religion, of independence of individuals and of austerity of mores.≠"

John Quincy Adams had conversed with Tocqueville about the differences between the colonization of New England and of the states in the West and had also mentioned the importance of the "point of departure," of the way in which the United States was born (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 152).

n. Hervé de Tocqueville: "It has been said above that great lords had come to settle in America. Farther along, in chapter 4, it will be said that they founded the colony of Maryland. Beware of apparent contradictions. They will be avoided by developing the thought. This is often necessary. The author is too brief, *sometimes"* (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 104).

learning spread among these men than within any European nation of the present day. All, perhaps without a single exception, had received a rather advanced education; and several among them had made themselves known in Europe by their talents and knowledge. The other colonies had been founded by adventurers without families; the emigrants of New England brought with them admirable elements of order and morality; they went to the wilderness accompanied by their wives and children. But what distinguished them, above all, from all the others was the very aim of their enterprise. It was not necessity that forced them to abandon their country; there they left a social position worthy of regret and a secure livelihood. Nor did they come to the New World in order to improve their situation or to increase their wealth; they tore themselves from the comforts of their homeland to obey a purely intellectual need. By exposing themselves to the inevitable hardships of exile, they wanted to assure the triumph of *an idea.*

The emigrants, or, as they so accurately called themselves, the *pilgrims,* belonged to that English sect given the name Puritan because of the austerity of its principles. Puritanism was not only a religious doctrine, but also at several points it was mingled with the most absolute democratic and republican theories. From that had come its most dangerous adversaries. The Puritans, persecuted by the government of the mother country and, in the strictness of their principles, offended by the daily course of the society in which they lived, sought a land so barbarous and so abandoned by the world that they would still be allowed to live there as they wished and to pray to God in liberty.

A few citations will show the spirit of these pious adventurers better than anything that we could add.

Nathaniel Morton, historian of the first years of New England, begins in this way:[6]

6. New England's Memorial, *p. 13 [13–14 (ed.)], Boston, 1826. Also see the* History *of Hutchinson,*[o] *vol. II [I (ed.)], p. 440. [Also see the work entitled* An Account of the Church of Christ in Plymouth. *Collection of the Historical Society of Massachusetts, vol. IV, p. 107 [107–41 (ed.)].]*

o. Probably the appendix, *A Summary of the Affairs of the Colony of New-Plymouth,*

I have always believed, he says, that it was a sacred duty for us, whose fathers received such numerous and memorable demonstrations of divine goodness in the settlement of this colony, to perpetuate the memory of them in writing. What we have seen and what we have been told by our fathers, we must make known to our children, so that the generations to come learn to praise the Lord [(Psalms LXXVIII, 3, 4) (ed.)]; so that the lineage of Abraham, his servant, and the sons of Jacob, his chosen, keep forever the memory of the miraculous works of God (Ps. CV, 5, 6). [. . . (ed.)[p] . . .] They must know how the Lord brought his vine into the wil-

from the First Settlement until the incorporation with Massachusets-Bay &c. in one Province, pp. 449–81.

p. Tocqueville cites texts more or less freely as his times allowed. Deletions of words or sentences are not indicated. The editor has carefully corrected most of these citations; in certain cases judged to be of little importance, he has simply noted the deletions made by the author.

The first fragment from Morton says:

> I have for some length of time looked upon it as a duty incumbent, especially on the immediate successors of those that have had so large experience of those many memorable and signal demonstrations of God's goodness, viz. The first beginners of this plantation in New England, to commit to writing his gracious dispensations on that behalf; having so many inducements thereunto, not only otherwise, but so plentifully in the sacred Scriptures, that so, what we have seen, and what our fathers have told us, we may not hide from our children, shewing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord. Psal. 78.3, 4. That especially the seed of Abraham his servant, and the children of Jacob his chosen, may remember his marvelous works (Psal. 105. 5, 6) [. . . (ed.) . . .] how that God brought a vine into this wilderness; that he cast out the heathen and planted it; and he also made room for it, and he caused it to take deep root, and it filled the land; so that it hath sent forth its boughs to the sea, and its branches to the river. Psal. 80, 8, 9. And not only so, but also that He hath guided his people by his strength to his holy habitation, and planted them in the mountain of his inheritance (Exod. 15. 13.) [. . . (ed.) . . .], God may have the glory of all, unto whom it is most due; so also some rays of glory may reach the names of those blessed saints that were the main instruments of the beginning of this happy enterprise.

The second text from Morton reads:

> And the time being come that they must depart, [. . . (ed.) . . .] a town called Delft Haven, [. . . (ed.) . . .] which had been their resting place [. . . (ed.) . . .] but they knew that they were pilgrims and strangers here below, and looked not much on these things, but lifted up their eyes to heaven, their dearest country, where God hath prepared for them a city, Heb. Xi, 16, and therein quieted their spirits.
>
> When they came to the place, they found the ship and all things ready; and such

> derness; how he planted it and removed the pagans; how he prepared a place for it, put its roots down deeply, and then allowed it to spread and cover the earth (Ps. LXXX, 15, 13 [Psalms LXXX, 8, 9 (ed.)]; and not only that, but also how he led his people toward his holy tabernacle, and established them on the mountain of his heritage (Exod. XV, 13). [. . . (ed.) . . .] These facts must be known, so that [. . . (ed.) . . .] God receives the honor he is due, and so that some rays of his glory can fall on the venerable names of the saints who served as his instruments.

It is impossible to read this beginning without being imbued, despite yourself, with a religious and solemn impression; you seem to inhale an air of antiquity and a kind of biblical perfume.

The conviction that animates the writer elevates his language. In your eyes, as in his, it no longer concerns a small band of adventurers going to seek their fortune across the seas; it is the seed of a great people that God comes to set down with his own hands in a predestined land.

The author continues and depicts the departure of the first emigrants in this way:[7]

> Thus, he says, they left this city (Delft-Haven) [. . . (ed.) . . .] which had been for them a place of rest; but they were calm; they knew that they were pilgrims and strangers here below. They were not attached to the

of their friends as could not come with them, followed after them [. . . (ed.) . . .]. One night was spent with little sleep with the most, but with friendly entertainment, and Christian discourse, and other real expressions of true Christian love. The next day [. . . (ed.) . . .] they went on board, and their friends with them, where truly doleful was the sight of that sad and mournful morning, to hear what sighs and sobs, and prayers did sound amongst them; what tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each others heart, that sundry of the Dutch strangers, that stood on the Keys as spectators, could not refrain from tears. [. . . (ed.) . . .] But the tide (which stays for no man) calling them away, that were thus loth to depart, their reverend pastor falling down on his knees, and they all with him, with watery cheeks commended them with most fervent prayers unto the Lord and his blessing; and then with mutual embraces, and many tears, they took their leave one of another, which proved to be the last leave to many of them.

7. New England's Memorial, *p. 23 [–24 (ed.)]*.

> things of the earth, but raised their eyes toward heaven, their dear homeland, where God had prepared for them his holy city. [Heb. XI, 16 (ed.)] [. . . (ed.) . . .] They finally arrived at the port where the vessel awaited them. A great number of friends who could not leave with them had at least wanted to follow them to this port. The night went by without sleep; it passed with outpourings of friendship, with pious speeches, with expressions full of a true Christian tenderness. The next day they went aboard; their friends still wanted to accompany them; then you heard deep sighs, you saw tears running from all eyes, you heard long hugs and kisses and fervent prayers that made strangers themselves feel moved. [. . . (ed.) . . .] Once the signal for departure was given, they fell on their knees, and their pastor, raising eyes full of tears toward heaven, commended them to the mercy of the Lord. Finally they took leave of each other, and pronounced this farewell that, for many among them, was to be the last.

The emigrants numbered about one hundred and fifty, men as well as women and children. Their goal was to found a colony on the banks of the Hudson, but, after wandering a long time on the ocean, they were finally forced to land on the arid coasts of New England, at the place where the town of Plymouth is found today. The rock where the pilgrims landed is still displayed.[8]

Says the historian I have already quoted:

> But before going further, let us consider for an instant the present condition of these poor people and let us marvel at the goodness of God who saved them.[9]
>
> They had now crossed the vast ocean, they were reaching the end of their journey, but they saw no friends to receive them, no dwelling to offer them shelter [. . . (ed.) . . .]; it was the middle of winter; and those who know our climate know how harsh the winters are and what furious storms then devastate our coasts. In this season, it is difficult to traverse known

8. *This rock has become an object of veneration in the United States. I saw fragments of it carefully preserved in several cities of the Union. Doesn't this show quite clearly that the power and greatness of man is entirely in his soul? Here is a rock touched for a moment by the feet of a few wretched individuals, and this rock becomes famous; it attracts the attention of a great people; the remains are venerated; far away, tiny pieces are shared. What has become of the threshold of so many palaces? Who worries about it?*

9. New England's Memorial, *p. 35 [–36 (ed.)].*

> places, even worse to settle on new shores. Around them appeared only a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of animals and savage men whose level of ferocity and number they did not know. [. . . (ed.) . . .] The earth was frozen; the land was covered with woods and thickets. Everything had a barbarous appearance. Behind them, they saw only the immense ocean that separated them from the civilized world. To find a little peace and hope, they could only turn their faces toward heaven.q

You must not believe that the piety of the Puritans was only speculative, or that it proved to be unfamiliar with the course of human concerns. Puritanism, as I said above, was almost as much a political theory as a religious doctrine. So, scarcely are these emigrants disembarked on this inhospitable coast that Nathaniel Morton has just described than their first concern is to organize themselves as a society. They immediately enact an agreement [<It is the social contract in proper form that Rousseau dreamed of in the following century>] which* reads:[10]

q. The original text says:

> But before we pass on, let the reader, with me, make a pause, and seriously consider this poor people's present condition, the more to be raised up to admiration of God's goodness towards them in their preservation: For being now passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation, they had now no friends to welcome them, no inns to entertain or refresh them [. . . (ed.) . . .] and, for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of the country, know them to be sharp and violent, subject to cruel and fierce storms, dangerous to travel to known places, much more to search unknown coasts. Besides, what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men? And what multitudes of them there were, they then knew not; [. . . (ed.) . . .] all things stand in appearance with a weather-beaten face, and the whole country full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue; if they looked behind them, there was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now a main bar and gulf to separate them from all the civil parts of the world.

* *New England's Memorial,* p. 37 [–38. Note omitted in certain editions. (ed.)].

10. *The emigrants who created the state of Rhode Island in 1638, those who established New Haven in 1637, the first inhabitants of Connecticut in 1639, and the founders of Providence in 1640, also began by drawing up a social contract that was submitted for approval to all those affected,* Pitkin's History, *[vol I, (ed.)] pp. 42 [43 (ed.)] and 47.*

> We, whose names follow,[r] who, for the glory of God, the development of the Christian faith and the honor of our country,[s] have undertaken to establish the first colony on these distant shores,[t] we covenant by these presents, by mutual and solemn consent, and before God, to form ourselves into a body of political society, for the purpose of governing ourselves and working for the accomplishment of our plans; and by virtue of this contract, we covenant to promulgate laws, acts, ordinances, and to establish, as needed, magistrates to whom we promise submission and obedience.

This took place in 1620. From that period on, emigration did not stop. Each year, the religious and political passions that tore apart the British Empire throughout the reign of Charles I drove new swarms of sectarians to the coasts of America. In England, the center of Puritanism continued to be located in the middle classes;[u] most of the emigrants came from within the middle classes. The population of New England increased rapidly; and, while in the mother country men were still classed despotically according to the hierarchy of ranks, the colony increasingly presented the novel spectacle of a thoroughly homogeneous society. Democracy, such as antiquity had not dared dream it, burst forth fully grown and fully armed from the midst of the old feudal society.

Content to remove the seeds of troubles and the elements of new rev-

r. The quoted fragment reads:

> We whose names are under-written, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the faith, &c. Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honour of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid: And by virtue hereof, do enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

s. Omitted: "our king and our country . . ."
t. The text says: "in the northern parts of Virginia."
u. Tocqueville uses the words *class* and *rank* indiscriminately.

olutions, the English government watched this heavy emigration without distress. It even encouraged it with all of its power and seemed hardly at all concerned with the fate of those who came to American soil seeking a refuge from the harshness of its laws. You could have said that the English government saw New England as a region delivered to the dreams of the imagination that should be abandoned to the free experiments of innovators.

The English colonies, and this was one of the principal causes of their prosperity, always enjoyed more internal liberty and more political independence than the colonies of other peoples; but nowhere was this principle of liberty more completely applied than in the states of New England.

It was then generally agreed that the lands of the New World belonged to the European nation that had first discovered them.

In this way, nearly the entire littoral of North America became an English possession toward the end of the sixteenth century. The means used by the British government to populate these new domains were of different kinds. In certain cases, the king subjected a portion of the New World to a governor of his choosing, charged with administering the country in his name and under his direct orders;[11] this is the colonial system adopted by the rest of Europe. At other times, he granted ownership of certain portions of the country to a man or to a company.[12] All the civil and political powers were then concentrated in the hands of one or several individuals who, under the inspection and control of the crown, sold the land and governed the inhabitants. Finally, a third system consisted of giving a certain number of emigrants the right to form a political society, under the patronage of the mother country, and to govern themselves in everything not contrary to its laws.

This method of colonization, so favorable to liberty, was put into practice only in New England.[13]

11. *This was the case for the state of New York.*

12. *Maryland, the Carolinas, Pennsylvania, New Jersey were in this case. See* Pitkin's History, *vol. I, pp. 13–31.*

13. *See in the work entitled:* Historical Collection of State Papers and other Authentic Documents Intended as Materials for an History of the United States of America, *by Ebenezer Hazard, printed at Philadelphia, MDCCXCII, a very large number of precious*

As early as 1628,[14] a charter of this nature was granted by Charles I to the emigrants who came to found the colony of Massachusetts.

But, in general, charters were not granted to the colonies of New England until long after their existence had become an accomplished fact. Plymouth, Providence, New Haven, the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island[15] were founded without the support and, in a sense, without the knowledge of the mother country. The new inhabitants, without denying the supremacy of the home country, did not draw on it as the source of powers; they incorporated themselves. And it was only thirty or forty years after, under Charles II, that a royal charter legalized their existence.

So it is often difficult, while surveying the first historical and legislative memorials of New England, to see the link connecting the emigrants to the country of their ancestors. At every moment you can see them performing some act of sovereignty; they name their magistrates, make peace and war, establish regulations for public order, provide laws for themselves as if they were answerable only to God alone[16] [≠later, when the colonies began to become powerful, the mother country raised the claim of defending and directing them≠].

Nothing is more singular and, at the very same time, more instructive

documents valuable in their contents and authenticity, relating to the early years of the colonies, among others, the different charters that were granted by the English crown, as well as the first acts of their governments.

Also see the analysis of all these charters that Mr. Story, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, makes in the introduction of his Commentary on the Constitution of the United States.

All these documents demonstrate that the principles of representative government and the external forms of political liberty were introduced in all the colonies almost from their birth. These principles were developed more fully in the North than in the South, but they existed everywhere.

14. *See* Pitkin's History, *vol. I, p. 35 [36 (ed.)]. See* The History of the Colony of Massachusetts, *by Hutchinson, vol. I, p. 9.*

15. *See* id., *pp. 42–47 [vol. I (ed.)].*

16. *The inhabitants of Massachusetts, in the establishment of criminal and civil laws for proceedings and for the courts of justice, moved away from the customs followed in England: in 1650 the name of the King still did not appear at the head of judicial orders. See Hutchinson, vol. I, p. 452.*

than the legislation of this period;[v] there, above all, is found the key to the great social enigma that the United States presents to the world of today.

Among these memorials, we will particularly single out, as one of the most characteristic, the law code that the small state of Connecticut gave itself in 1650.[17]

The legislators of Connecticut[18] first take charge of the penal laws; and to write them, they conceive the strange idea of drawing upon sacred texts:

"Whoever will worship a God other than the Lord," they begin by saying, "will be put to death."

Ten or twelve clauses of the same nature, borrowed word for word from *Deuteronomy, Exodus* and *Leviticus,* follow.

Blasphemy, witchcraft, adultery,[19] rape are punished with death; the same punishment is imposed on flagrant insult by a son toward his parents. In this way, the legislation of a primitive and half-civilized people was transferred to a society in which minds were enlightened and mores were mild; so the death penalty was never so common in the laws, nor so rarely applied to the guilty.

Above all, in this body of penal laws, the legislators are preoccupied with upholding moral order and standards of good behavior; they constantly enter, therefore, into the realm of conscience. There is hardly any sin that

v. "Ask Niles about the authenticity of the blue laws" (YTC, CVb, p. 33).

The laws of the first colonists of Connecticut were called blue laws. Understood in the broadest sense, the term designates the regulations for the strict observance of the Sabbath, which formerly existed throughout the American territory and which partially survive today.

Nathaniel Niles was the secretary of the American delegation in Paris from 1830 to 1833.

17. Code of 1650, *p. 28 (Hartford, 1830).*

18. *See as well in the* History *of Hutchinson, vol. I, pp. 435–56, the analysis of the penal code adopted in 1648 by the colony of Massachusetts; this code is drafted on principles analogous to that of Connecticut.*

19. *Adultery was likewise punished by death under the law of Massachusetts, and Hutchinson, vol. I, p. 441, says that several persons in fact suffered death for this crime; he cites on this subject a curious anecdote which relates to the year 1663. A married woman had relations with a young man; she became a widow and married him; several years passed; the public finally began to suspect the intimacy that had formerly existed between the spouses; they were charged under the criminal law; they were imprisoned, and both were nearly condemned to death.*

they do not manage to submit to the censure of the magistrate. The reader has been able to observe how harshly the laws punished adultery and rape. Mere flirtation between unmarried people is severely suppressed. On the guilty, the judge has the right to inflict one of three punishments: a fine, a flogging or a wedding.[20] And if the records of the old courts of New Haven are to be believed, proceedings of this nature were not rare; you find, dated May 1, 1660, a verdict with a fine and reprimand against a young woman accused of having uttered a few indiscreet words and of allowing herself to be kissed.[21] The Code of 1650 abounds in preventive measures. Laziness and drunkenness are severely punished.[22] Innkeepers cannot provide more than a certain quantity of wine to each consumer; a fine or a flogging cracks down on a simple lie when it might be harmful.[23] In other places, the legislator, completely forgetting the great principles of religious liberty that he claimed in Europe, forces, by threat of fines, attendance at divine[24] worship.[w] And he goes so far as to impose severe penalties,[25] and often death,

20. Code of 1650, *p. 48.*

It seems that sometimes judges gave these various penalties cumulatively, as you see in a decision rendered in 1643 (p. 114, New Haven Antiquities *), which declares that Marguerite Bedfort [Bedforde (ed.)], convicted of having committed reprehensible acts, will suffer the penalty of whipping and will be enjoined to marry Nicolas Jemmings [Jennings (ed.)], her accomplice.*

21. New Haven Antiquities, *p. 104 [–106 (ed.)]. Also see in the* History *of Hutchinson, vol. I, p. 435 [–436 (ed.)], several judgments as extraordinary as the former.*

22. Code of 1650, *pp. 50, 57.*

23. Id., *p. 64.*

24. Id., *p. 44.*

w. Cf. Beaumont, *Marie,* I, p. 536–37, and Tocqueville's account (appendix III).

25. *This was not particular to Connecticut. See among others the law of December 13, 1644, in Massachusetts, which sentences Anabaptists to banishment.* Historical Collection of State Papers, *vol. I, p. 538. Also see the law published on October 14, 1656, against the Quakers: "Whereas, says the law, an accursed sect of heretics called Quakers has recently arisen . . ." Clauses follow which impose a very heavy fine on captains of vessels that bring Quakers into the country. The Quakers who succeed in entering will be flogged and put into prison to work. Those who defend their opinions will first be fined, then sentenced to prison and driven from the province. Same collection, vol. I, p. 630.*

[If the Quakers banished in this way were found once again in the state, they were, once identified, condemned to death. See same collection, vol. II, p. 456, the sentencing to death of

on Christians who want to worship God according to a creed different from his own.[26] Finally, the fervor for regulations, which possesses him, sometimes leads him to deal with concerns most unworthy of him. Thus, in the same code, there is a law that prohibits the use of tobacco.[27] It must not be forgotten, moreover, that these bizarre or tyrannical laws were not at all imposed; that they were voted by the free participation of all those concerned; and that the mores were still more austere and puritanical than the laws. In the year 1649, a solemn association was formed in Boston whose purpose was to prevent the worldly luxury of long hair.[28] E

Such errors undoubtedly shame the human spirit; they testify to the infirmity of our nature, which, incapable of firmly grasping the true and the just, is most often reduced to choosing only between two excesses.

Alongside this penal legislation, so strongly stamped by narrow sectarian spirit and by all the religious passions that were excited by persecution and were still seething deep within souls, a body of political laws is found. The two are, in a way, bound together. But those political laws, written two hundred years ago, still seem very far ahead of the spirit of liberty of our age.

The general principles on which modern constitutions rest, which most of the Europeans of the seventeenth century scarcely understood and which at that time triumphed incompletely in Great Britain, were all recognized and laid down by the laws of New England. There, the intervention of the people in public affairs, the free vote of taxes, the responsibility

two men and a woman convicted of this crime (October 18, 1649). The woman, named Mary Dyer, received mercy, but had to attend the execution of her two accomplices with the cord around her neck.

Also see in the same collection, p. 573, a law of Plymouth: "Whereas, says this law, the Quakers sometimes obtain places to stay, [and (ed.)] horses by means of which they move rapidly from place to place and escape the searches of the legal authorities, poisoning the people with their accursed doctrines . . . [this law (ed.)] orders that the horses seized in possession of the Quakers will be confiscated."

See in general at the end of this volume the acts of the government of New Plymouth against the Quakers.]

26. *In the penal law of Massachusetts, the Catholic priest who sets foot in the colony after being expelled is punished by death.*

27. Code of 1650, *p. 96.*

28. New England's Memorial, *p. 316.*

of the agents of power, individual liberty, and jury trial were established without argument and in fact.

There, these generative principles receive an application and developments that not a single European nation has yet dared to give them.

In Connecticut, from the beginning, the electoral body was comprised of all citizens, and that is understood without difficulty.[29] Among this emerging people, a nearly perfect equality of means and, even more, of minds then reigned.[30]

In Connecticut, at that time, all the agents of executive power were elected, even the Governor of the state.[31]

[In Connecticut in 1650, all] The citizens older than sixteen years of age were obliged to bear arms; they formed a national militia that named its officers and had to be ready at all times to march in defense of the country.[32]

In the laws of Connecticut, as in all those of New England, you see arising and developing the town independence that still today constitutes the principle and life of American liberty.

Among most European nations, political existence began in the higher ranks of society; little by little and always incompletely, it was transmitted to the various parts of the social body.

In America, in contrast, you can say that the town was organized before the county; the county, before the state; the state, before the Union.

In New England, as early as 1650, the town is completely and definitively formed. Gathered around this town individuality and strongly attached to it are interests, passions, duties, and rights. Within the town, a real, active,

29. Constitution of 1638, *p. 17 [12 (ed.)]*.

30. *As early as 1641, the General Assembly of Rhode Island unanimously declared that the state government consisted of a democracy and that power rested with the body of freemen who alone had the right to make laws and to oversee their execution.* Pitkin's History, *p. 47 [46 (ed.)]*.

31. Constitution of 1638, *p. 12.*

32. Code of 1650, *p. 70.*

totally democratic and republican political life reigns. The colonies still recognize the supremacy of the mother country; the monarchy is the law of the state, but in the town, the republic is already fully alive.

The town names its magistrates of all sorts; it taxes itself; it apportions and levies the tax on itself.[33] In the New England town, the law of representation is not accepted. As in Athens, matters that touch the interests of all are treated in the public square and within the general assembly of citizens.

When you attentively examine the laws that were promulgated during these early years of the American republics, you are struck by the legislator's knowledge of government and advanced theories.

It is evident that he had a more elevated and complete idea of the duties of society toward its members than European legislators of that time and that he imposed obligations on society that society still eluded elsewhere. In the states of New England, from the start, the fate of the poor was assured;[34] strict measures were taken for maintaining roads; and officers were named to oversee them.[35] Towns had public records in which the results of general deliberations, deaths, marriages, births were inscribed;[36] clerks were appointed to maintain these records.[37] Some officers were charged with the administration of unclaimed inheritances, others, with overseeing the boundaries of legacies. The principal function of several was to maintain public peace in the town.[38]

[≠The legislation of this era announces in the mass of the people and in its leaders a civilization already well advanced; you feel that those who make the laws and those who submit to them all belong to a race of intelligent and enlightened men who have never been completely preoccupied by the material concerns of life.≠]

33. Code of 1650, *p. 80.*
34. Code of 1650, *p. 78.*
35. Id., *p. 49.*
36. *See the* History *of Hutchinson, vol. I, p. 455.*
37. Code of 1650, *p. 86.*
38. Id., *p. 40.*

The law gets into a thousand different details to provide for and to satisfy a host of social needs of which, today in France, we still have only a vague awareness. [{Nothing then in our old Europe could give the idea of a social organization as extensive and as perfect.}]

But it is in the prescriptions relating to public education that, from the very beginning, you see fully revealed the original character of American civilization.

"Whereas, says the law, Satan, enemy of humanity, finds in the ignorance of men his most powerful weapons, and it is important that the knowledge brought by our fathers does not remain buried in their grave;—whereas the education of children is one of the first interests of the State, with the help of the Lord . . ."[39] Then follow the provisions that create schools in all the towns and oblige the inhabitants, under penalty of heavy fines, to tax themselves to support them. Secondary schools are established in the same way in the most populated districts. Municipal magistrates must watch that parents send their children to school; they have the right to levy fines against those who refuse to do so. And if resistance continues, society then displaces the family, lays hold of the child and removes from the fathers the rights that nature had given to them, but that they knew so poorly how to use.[40] The reader will undoubtedly have noticed the preamble of these ordinances: in America, it is religion that leads to enlightenment; it is the observance of divine laws that brings men to liberty.

When, after thus casting a rapid glance over American society in 1650, you examine the state of Europe and particularly that of the continent

39. Id., *p. 90 [–91 (ed.)].*[x]
x. The code of 1650 says:

> It being one chiefe project of that old deluder, Sathan, to keepe men from the knowledge of the scriptures, as in former times, keeping them in an unknowne tongue, so in these latter times, by perswading them from the use of tongues, so that at least, the true sence and meaning of the originall might bee clouded with false glosses of saint seeming deceivers; and that learning may not bee buried in the grave of our forefathers, in church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our indeavors . . . (pp. 90–91).

40. Code of 1650, *p. 38.*

around this same era, you are filled by a profound astonishment. On the European continent, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, absolute monarchy triumphed on all sides over the ruins of the oligarchic and feudal liberty of the Middle Ages. [<≠The top of the social edifice already received the lights of modern civilization, while the base still remained in the darkness of ignorance [v. of the Middle Ages].≠>] In the heart of this brilliant and literary Europe, the idea of rights had perhaps never been more completely misunderstood; never had peoples experienced less of political life; never had minds been less preoccupied by the notions of true liberty. And at that time these same principles, unknown or scorned by European nations, were proclaimed in the wilderness of the New World and became the future creed [{political catechism}] of a great people. The boldest theories of the human mind were reduced to practice in this society so humble in appearance, a society in which probably not a single statesman would then have deigned to be involved; there, the imagination of man, abandoned to its natural originality, improvised legislation without precedent. Within this obscure democracy that had still not brought forth either generals, or philosophers, or great writers, a man could stand up in the presence of a free people and give, to the acclamation of all, this beautiful definition of liberty:[41]

> Let us not be mistaken about what we must understand by our independence.[y] There is in fact a kind of corrupt liberty, the use of which is common to animals as it is to man, and which consists of doing whatever

41. Mather's Magnalia Christi Americana, *vol. II, p. 13 [vol. I, p. 113 (ed.)].*

This speech was given by Winthrop; he was accused of having committed arbitrary acts as a magistrate; after delivering the speech of which I have just given a fragment, he was acquitted with applause, and from that time on he was always re-elected Governor of the State. See Marshall, vol. I, p. 166 [167 (ed.)].

y. The original says:

> Nor would I have you to mistake in the Point of your own liberty. There is a liberty of corrupt nature, which is affected by men and beasts, to do what they list; and this liberty is inconsistent with authority, impatient of all restraint; by this liberty, Sumus Omnes Deteriores; 'tis the grand enemy of truth and peace, and all the ordinances of God are bent against it. But there is a civil, a moral, a federal liberty, which is the proper end and object of authority; it is a liberty for that only which is just and good; for this liberty you are to stand with the hazard of your very lives.

> you please. This liberty is the enemy of all authority; it suffers all rules with impatience; with it, we become inferior to ourselves; it is the enemy of truth and peace; and God believed that he had to rise up against it! But there is a civil and moral liberty that finds its strength in union, and that the mission of power itself is to protect; it is the liberty to do without fear all that is just and good. This holy liberty we must defend at all cost, and if necessary, at risk of our life.

I have already said enough to reveal Anglo-American civilization in its true light. It is the product (and this point of departure must always be kept in mind) of two perfectly distinct elements that elsewhere are often at odds. But in America, these two have been successfully blended, in a way, and marvelously combined. I mean the *spirit of religion* and the *spirit of liberty.*

The founders of New England were at the very same time ardent sectarians and impassioned innovators. Restrained by the tightest bonds of certain religious beliefs, they were free of all political prejudices. [{Religion led them to enlightenment; the observance of divine laws brought them to liberty.}]

From that, two diverse but not opposite tendencies resulted whose traces can easily be found everywhere, in the mores as in the laws.[z]

Some men sacrifice their friends, family, and native land for a religious opinion; you could believe that they are absorbed in the pursuit of the intellectual good that they have come to purchase at such a high price. You see them, however, seeking material riches and moral enjoyments with an almost equal fervor, heaven in the other world, and well-being and liberty in this one.

In their hands, political principles, laws, and human institutions seem to be malleable things that can be shaped and combined at will.

The barriers that imprisoned the society where they were born fall before

z. Variant in the margin: "≠Extreme obedience to established rules in the moral world, extreme independence, restless spirit of innovation in the political world, these are the two diverse and seemingly opposing tendencies that are revealed at each step in the course of American society.≠"

them; old opinions that for centuries ruled the world vanish; an almost limitless course and a field without horizons open. The human mind rushes toward them, sweeping over them in all directions. But having arrived at the limits of the political world, it stops by itself. In fear and trembling, it sets aside the use of its most formidable abilities, abjures doubt, renounces the need to innovate, refrains even from lifting the veil of the sanctuary, and bows respectfully before truths that it accepts without discussion. [≠After having rested awhile in the midst of the certainties of the moral order, man begins to move again and reenters the political arena with more fervor.≠][a]

In the moral world, therefore, everything is classified, coordinated, foreseen, decided in advance. In the political world, everything is agitated, contested, uncertain; in the one, passive though voluntary obedience; in the other, independence, scorn for experience and jealousy of all authority.

Far from harming each other, these two tendencies, apparently so opposed, move in harmony and seem to offer mutual support.

Religion sees in civil liberty a noble exercise of the faculties of man; in the political world, a field offered by the Creator to the efforts of intelligence. Free and powerful in its sphere, satisfied with the place reserved for it, religion knows that its dominion is that much better established because it rules only by its own strength and dominates hearts without other support.

Liberty sees in religion the companion of its struggles and triumphs, the cradle of its early years, the divine source of its rights. Liberty considers religion as the safeguard of mores, mores as the guarantee of laws and the pledge of its own duration.[F]

[Both, taking man by the hand, guide his steps and show his way in the wilderness.]

a. In the margin: "≠There will be many things to say about that. The American political world rests upon foundations different from ours, but just as settled and certain. So you cannot say that there is more uncertainty and vagueness there than in the moral world.≠"

Reasons for Some Singularities That the Laws and Customs[b] of the Anglo-Americans Present

Some remnants of aristocratic institutions within the most complete democracy.—Why?—What is of Puritan origin and of English origin must be carefully distinguished.

[≠From whatever side I envisage the laws and mores of the Anglo-Americans, I rediscover striking traces of their origin {of the point of departure}. The reading of historians, the study of legislation, the sight of things all involuntarily lead my steps back toward the point of departure. {But I despair of making the whole extent of my idea understood by those who have not seen English America with their own eyes.}≠]

The reader must not draw from what precedes consequences that are too general and absolute. The social condition, the religion and the mores of the first emigrants undoubtedly exercised an immense influence over the destiny of their new country. It was not up to them, however, to establish a society whose point of departure was found only within themselves; no one can entirely free himself from the past. With ideas and customs that were their own, they mingled, either voluntarily or unknowingly, other customs and ideas that they got from their education or from the national traditions of their country.

So when you want to know and judge the Anglo-Americans of today, what is of Puritan origin or of English origin must be carefully distinguished.

You often encounter in the United States laws and customs that contrast with all that surrounds them. These laws seem written in a spirit opposed to the dominant spirit of American legislation; these mores seem contrary to the social state as a whole. If the English colonies had been founded in a century of darkness, or if their origin was already lost in the shadows of time, the problem would be insoluble.

b. In an early draft, the title said: ". . . THAT THE SOCIAL STATE OF THE ANGLO-AMERICANS PRESENTS." This section was initially at the beginning of chapter III (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 82).

I will cite a single example to make my thought understood.

The civil and criminal legislation of the Americans knows only two means of action: *prison* or *bail.*[c] The first action in proceedings consists of obtaining bail from the defendant or, if he refuses, of having him incarcerated; afterwards the validity of the evidence or the gravity of the charges is discussed.

Clearly such legislation is directed against the poor and favors only the rich.

A poor man does not always make bail, even in civil matters, and if he is forced to await justice in prison, his forced inactivity soon reduces him to destitution.[d]

A wealthy man, on the contrary, always succeeds in escaping imprisonment in civil matters; even more, if he has committed a crime, he easily evades the punishment awaiting him: after providing bail, he disappears. So it can be said that for him all the penalties of the law are reduced to fines.[42] What is more aristocratic than such legislation?[e]

In America, however, it is the poor who make the law, and usually they reserve the greatest advantages of society for themselves.

It is in England where the explanation for this phenomenon must be found: the laws I am speaking about are English.[43] The Americans have not changed them, even though they are repugnant to their legislation as a whole and to the mass of their ideas.

The thing that people change the least after their customs is their civil

c. "Ask Mr. Livingston about prisons and bail" (YTC, CVb, p. 33). Probably Edward Livingston. See note 2 of Tocqueville's introduction (p. 30).

d. "For prison ruins him by preventing him from working and bail makes him give up the fruit of his work.

"To develop. Opinion of Mr. Duponceau.

"Little guarantee that the poor have against the oppression of municipal magistrates.

"Unwritten law that puts justice into the hands of the privileged class of lawyers" (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 4–5). The conversation with Mr. Duponceau is found in portable notebook 3 (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 182); see the conversation with [Alexander] Everett (*ibid.,* p. 95).

42. *There are certainly crimes for which there is no bail, but they are very few in number.*

e. Cf. Beaumont, *Marie,* I, pp. 197, 367–70.

43. *See Blackstone and Delolme, book I, chap. X.*

legislation. The civil laws are familiar only to jurists, that is, to those who have a direct interest in keeping them as they are, good or bad, because they know them. The bulk of the nation knows them hardly at all; they see them in action only in individual cases, grasp their tendency only with difficulty, and submit to them without thinking about it.

I have cited an example; I could have pointed out many others.

The picture that American society presents is, if I can express myself in this way, covered by a democratic layer beneath which from time to time you catch a glimpse of the old colors of the aristocracy.

CHAPTER 3

Social State of the Anglo-Americans

[Definition of the words *social state.*[a]/

I will speak so frequently about the social state of the Anglo-Americans that, first and foremost, I need to say what I mean by the words *social state.*

In my view, the social state is the material and intellectual condition in which a people finds itself in a given period.]

The social state is ordinarily the result of a fact, sometimes of laws, most often of these two causes together. But once it exists, it can itself be considered the first cause of most of the laws, customs and ideas that regulate the conduct of nations; what it does not produce, it modifies.[b]

So to know the legislation and the mores of a people, it is necessary to begin by studying its social state.[c]

a. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not know if this definition is very useful. It slows the transition from the second to the third chapter.

In any case, mores should be put before the other causes that modify social state. Mores come before the fact whatever it may be. They precede laws. Example: Puritan mores precede and lead to the fact of emigration."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "I do not share this opinion" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 92).

b. "Among a people property is divided in a certain way, enlightenment is more or less equal, morality is more or less high, that is what I call its social state./

"In general the social state is the result of a fact predating the laws, but the laws develop its consequences and modify it" (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 9).

The social state according to Tocqueville recalls Montesquieu's concept of the general spirit of the nation (cf. *L'esprit des lois,* book XIX, chapters IV and V). On this question, see Anna Maria Battista, "Lo stato sociale democratico nella analisi di Tocqueville," *Pensiero Politico* 4, no. 3 (1973): 336–95.

c. In the margin, in pencil: "Vague, indeterminate. Perhaps examples instead of definitions."

That the Salient Point of the Social State of the Anglo-Americans Is to Be Essentially Democratic

First emigrants of New England.—Equal among themselves.—Aristocratic laws introduced in the South.—Period of the Revolution.—Change in the inheritance laws.—Effects produced by this change.—Equality pushed to its extreme limits in the new states of the West.—Intellectual equality.

Several important remarks about the social state of the Anglo-Americans could be made, but one dominates all the others.[d]

The social state of the Americans is eminently democratic. It has had this character since the birth of the colonies; it has it even more today.[e]

[≠As soon as you look at the civil and political society of the United States, you discover two great facts that dominate all the others and from

d. *Causes of the social state and current government of America:*

1. *Their origin:* excellent point of departure. Intimate mix of religion and of the spirit of liberty. Cold and rational race.
2. *Their geographic position:* no neighbors.
3. *Their commercial and industrial activity.* Everything, even their vices, is favorable to them now.
4. *The material good fortune* that they enjoy.
5. *The religious spirit that reigns:* republican and democratic religion.
6. The diffusion of useful knowledge.
7. Very pure morals.
8. The division into small States. They prove nothing for a large one.
9. The absence of a great capital where everything is concentrated. Care to avoid it.
10. Commercial and provincial activity that means that each person finds something to do at home (Alphabetic Notebook A, YTC, BIIa and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 207).

e. Hervé de Tocqueville:

This is too absolute. At least you should say nearly all the colonies, in order to be in agreement with page 128 (chap. 4), where you speak about the aristocratic influence long exercised to the south and west of the Hudson. This difficulty arises from chapter 2 where Alexis recognized only two political divisions of the territory, which forced him to generalize too much. Another division and a few sentences added, and everything will be fine (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 92). Page 128 of the copy read by Hervé and the other critics corresponds to pages 50–51 of this edition.

which the others are derived. Democracy constitutes the social state; the dogma of the sovereignty of the people, the political law.

These two things are not analogous. Democracy is society's way of being. Sovereignty of the people, a form of [v. the essence of] government. Nor are they inseparable, because democracy[f] is even more compatible with despotism than with liberty.

But they are correlative. Sovereignty of the people is always more or less a fiction wherever democracy is not established.≠][g]

I said in the preceding chapter that a very great equality reigned among the emigrants who came to settle on the shores of New England. Not even the germ of aristocracy was ever deposited in that part of the Union. No influences except intellectual ones [{a kind of intellectual patronage}] could ever be established there. The people got used to revering certain names, as symbols of learning and virtue. The voice of certain citizens gained a power over the people that perhaps could have been correctly called aristocratic, if it could have been passed down invariably from father to son.

This happened [{north}] east of the Hudson; [{south}] southwest of this river, and as far down as Florida, things were otherwise.

f. With a reminder in the margin, in pencil: "Explain what is understood by democracy."

Tocqueville never arrived at a satisfactory definition of democracy. He always used the term in different senses. Harold Laski, in his introduction to *Democracy in America* (*OC,* I, p. xxx), distinguishes four; James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America"* (pp. 263–74), identified as many as eight: inevitable development or tendency, social condition, popular sovereignty, government of the people, mobility, middle classes, equality of conditions, open society. Jean-François Sutter, in "Tocqueville et le problème de la démocratie" (*Revue internationale de philosophie* 49 (1959): 330–40), examined the reason why Tocqueville did not manage to give one single definition of democracy. Cf. the revealing letter of Louis de Kergorlay, dated January 6, 1838, a letter that Tocqueville kept with the early drafts of the second part of his book (YTC, CVg, 2, published in *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 2, pp. 16–17).

g. In the margin: "≠Note that in this chapter the social state must never be confused with the political laws that follow from it; equality or inequality of conditions, which are facts, with democracy or aristocracy, which are laws. Reexamine from this point of view.≠"

In most of the States situated southwest[h] of the Hudson, great English landholders had come to settle. Aristocratic principles, and with them English laws of inheritance, had been imported.[*] I have shown the reasons that prevented a powerful aristocracy from ever being established in America. But these reasons, though existing southwest[j] of the Hudson, had less power there than [{north}] east of this river. To the south, one man alone could, with the help of slaves, cultivate a large expanse of land. So in this part of the continent wealthy landed proprietors were seen; but their influence was not precisely aristocratic, as understood in Europe, because they had no privileges at all, and cultivation by slaves gave them no tenants and therefore no patronage. Nonetheless, south of the Hudson, the great landholders formed a superior class, with its own ideas and tastes and generally concentrating political activity within its ranks. It was a kind of aristocracy not much different from the mass of the people whose passions and interests it easily embraced, exciting neither love nor hate;[k] in sum, weak and

h. This word is added later. At first, the word was *south.*
[*]. Note from Jefferson.
j. Hervé de Tocqueville:

Here again the drawback of only two divisions. Alexis finds himself forced to jump abruptly from the Southwest to the South, without the connection of ideas being clear, and the differences between this Southwest and the South remain unknown. Does slavery also exist in the Southwest? Is this part entirely homogeneous with the South? If it is, why speak successively of the West and the South? If it is not, why take his example from the South alone? (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 93).

k. Hervé de Tocqueville:

I do not know what that means in a country where there was no people. Alexis undoubtedly meant to say an aristocracy whose habits resembled the democratic habits of other parts of the Union. The expression does not seem right, nor do those that follow: an aristocracy that embraces the passions and interests of the people cannot remain indifferent to the people. Therefore, it is not right to say that it *excited neither love nor hate.* You would have to say that it excited no jealousy at all in the other classes. Proof that it was not indifferent is that two lines lower Alexis says that it furnished all of the great men of the Revolution. But when the leaders are taken from one class of citizens, you cannot say that it inspires neither love nor hate.

not very hardy. It was this class that, in the South, put itself at the head of the insurrection; the American Revolution owed its greatest men to it.

In this period, the entire society was shaken.[m] The people, in whose name the struggle was waged, the people—now a power—conceived the desire to act by themselves; democratic instincts awoke.[n] By breaking the yoke of the home country, the people acquired a taste for all kinds of independence. Little by little, individual influences ceased to make themselves felt; habits as well as laws began to march in unison toward the same end.

But it was the law of inheritance that pushed equality to its last stage.[o]

Édouard de Tocqueville: "I agree with my father only for the last paragraph, which must absolutely be revised. How can a weak and not very hardy class lead an insurrection?" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 93–94). The author paid no attention to these criticisms; the published version is identical to that in the manuscript.

m. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> This still seems to me too absolute. Society in the South had certainly been shaken, but that of New England where democracy already existed did not need to be shaken. Perhaps you should put: *the entire society received a new impulse.* Next I wonder where these people were who became a power. I see the effect perfectly without seeing the cause as clearly as I would like. It would seem from what Alexis says, page 130, that democratic instincts had won everywhere, even among those whose position should have set them most apart. Perhaps the aristocratic and rich leaders of the insurrection thought that they should recompense those who had fought under their command by granting them political rights or by extending those they already had. Once down this path, as always happens, one is not able to stop.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Apt observation. This first paragraph must be reworked a bit" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 94).

n. In the margin: "≠It was the aristocracy, if this name can be given to what was then at the head of society in America, which had armed the people and led them on the fields of battle.≠"

o. "Give me, for thirty years, a law for equal division of inheritance and liberty of the press and I will bring you a republic" (YTC, Cve, p. 63).

Tocqueville gives a privileged position to the structure of landed property in his theory. In his *Mémoire sur le paupérisme* (*Commentaire,* XXIII, 1983, p. 633), he repeats that it is the concentration of land that provoked the concentration of power and the birth of the aristocracy. The same idea often appears in the notes taken during his journey in America (conversations with Livingston, Clay, Latrobe, Sparks in YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 59, 87–88, 102, 109, 111–13), as well as during his journey in England

I am astonished that ancient and modern political writers have not attributed a greater influence on the course of human affairs to the laws of landed inheritance.[1] These laws belong, it is true, to the civil order; but they should be placed at the head of all political institutions, for they have an incredible influence on the social state of peoples, political laws being just the expression of the social state. In addition, the laws of inheritance have a sure and uniform way of operating on society; in a sense they lay hold of generations before their birth. Through them, man is armed with an almost divine power over the future of his fellows. The law-maker regulates the inheritance of citizens once, and he remains at rest for centuries: his work put in motion, he can keep his hands off; the machine acts on its own power, and moves as if self-directed toward an end set in advance.

Constituted in a certain way, the law of inheritance reunites, concentrates, gathers property and, soon after, power, around some head; in a way it makes aristocracy spring from the soil. Driven by other principles and set along another path, its action is even more rapid; it divides, shares, dis-

(*Voyages en Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie, OC,* V, 2, pp. 52, 28, 41–42). In a letter to Kergorlay of June 29, 1831 (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 231–33), he explains that it is one of the particulars of American society that most surprised him. Moreover, his interest in this question predates the journey to America. The division of the land is already mentioned in the notes of the journey in Sicily in 1827 (*Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 43, 45). The same idea reappears in his article on the social and political state of France before and after the Revolution of 1789, and in *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution.*

We know that the social consequences of the inheritance laws have been considered by Aristotle in the *Politics* (1266b8). Montesquieu took up the question again in *De l'esprit des lois* (book V, chapters V and VIII). Afterward the question occupied a central place in the political considerations of the revolutionary era. The beginning of the nineteenth century still had in mind the posthumous speech of Mirabeau (*Discours de M. de Mirabeau l'ainé sur l'égalité des partages dans les successions en ligne directe,* Imprimerie Nationale, Paris, 1791, 23 p.). Even the father of the author had treated it in one of his publications (*De la charte provinciale,* Paris: J. J. Blaise, 1829, 62p., pp. 12–13).

1. *By the inheritance laws, I understand all the laws whose principal end is to regulate the disposition of property after the death of the owner.*

The law of entail is among this number. It is true that it also has the result of preventing the owner from disposing of his property before his death; but it imposes the obligation on him of keeping it only with the view of having it go intact to his inheritor. So the principal end of the law of entail is to regulate the disposition of property after the death of the owner. All the rest is the means used.

seminates property and power. Sometimes people are then frightened by the rapidity of its march. Despairing of stopping its movement, they seek at least to create difficulties and obstacles before it; they want to counterbalance its action with opposing efforts; useless exertions! It crushes or sends flying into pieces all that gets in its way; it constantly rises and falls on the earth until nothing is left in sight but a shifting and intangible dust[p] on which democracy takes its seat.

When the law of inheritance allows and, even more, requires the equal division of the father's property among all the children, its effects are of two sorts; they should be carefully distinguished, even though they lead to the same end.

Due to the law of inheritance, the death of each owner leads to a revolution in property; not only do the holdings change masters, but so to speak, they change nature; they are constantly split into smaller portions. [The generations grow poorer as they succeed each other.]

That is the direct and, in a sense, the material effect of the law.[q] So in countries where legislation establishes equal division, property and particularly territorial fortunes necessarily have a permanent tendency to grow smaller. Nonetheless, if the law were left to itself, the effects of this legislation would make themselves felt only over time. Because as long as the family includes not more than two children (and the average for families in a populated country like France, we are told, is only three),[r] these chil-

p. In the margin in pencil: "This image of dust is exaggerated and lacks precision."

q. To the side in an earlier draft: " Explanatory note and on Rodat."

Is this Rodat Claude Raudot, magistrate and friend of Tocqueville and Beaumont? We can hardly think that the author would misspell the name of someone that he knew so well. Bonnel notes "Rodat" at two places in the drafts (see note s infra). In any case, no one of this name is found in the papers and correspondence of Tocqueville.

r. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Isn't Alexis considerably underestimating the family average? At least, 4 should be put in place of 3, father, mother and two children. I do not know if the law of averages should be invoked here. The family that has only one descendant escapes from the law of division. But the family that has 5 or 6! What a progression of division of the land!" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 95).

dren, sharing the wealth of their father and their mother, will be no less wealthy than each parent individually.

But the law of equal division exerts its influence not on the fate of property alone; it acts on the very soul of the proprietors, and calls their passions to its aid. These indirect effects rapidly destroy great fortunes and, above all, great estates.[s]

Among peoples for whom the inheritance law is based on the right of primogeniture, landed estates most often pass from generation to generation without being divided. That causes family spirit to be, in a way, embodied in the land. The family represents the land; the land represents the family; the land perpetuates its name, origin, glory, power and virtues.

s. Law of inheritance./
Effect of the law of inheritance.

1. Divides fortunes naturally. But this not very rapid, average number of children, to divide two fortunes, that of the father and that of the mother.

2. Prevents the desire to keep them. Great effect. Destroys family spirit and substitutes individual egoism, leads to selling the land in order to have income, favors the taste for luxury, the land passes into the hands of the peasants and doesn't come out again. Conversation with Rodat (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 9).

Law of inheritance. Its *direct effects,* its *indirect effects* (Rodat).

So greater equality not only among peoples of European races, but also among all peoples, in all times.

However manufacturing (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 8).

Tocqueville will devote a chapter in the second part of his book to the manufacturing aristocracy (chapter XX of volume III). On this point, this note and note d of p. 85 attest to an interest well before the voyage to England in 1835. Tocqueville had briefly visited England in 1833, but the notes of this first journey carry no trace of a particular attention to the problem of industry. It is generally agreed that his visit to Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham in 1835 is at the origin of this interest (*Voyages en Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie, OC,* V, 2, pp. 67, 81).

During a conversation with Tocqueville in the United States, Robert Vaux had already referred to the effects of manufacturing on the population (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa and *Voyage, OC,* V, p. 104). Beaumont, for his part, will not hesitate to affirm in the novel that he would publish in 1835: "In truth there exists in America something that resembles the feudal aristocracy. The factory is the manor; the manufacturer, the sovereign lord; the workers are the serfs" (*Marie,* I, pp. 241–42).

It is an undying witness to the past and a precious guarantee of life to come.[t]

When the inheritance law establishes equal division, it destroys the intimate connection that existed between family spirit and keeping the land; the land ceases to represent the family, for the land, inescapably divided after one or two generations, clearly must shrink continually and disappear entirely in the end. The sons of a great landed proprietor, if they are few, or if fortune favors them, can maintain the hope of not being poorer than their progenitor, but not of owning the same lands as he; their wealth will necessarily consist of other elements than his.[u]

Now, from the moment you take away from landed proprietors any great interest—arising from sentiment, memory, pride, or ambition—in keeping the land, you can be sure that sooner or later they will sell it. They have a great pecuniary interest in selling, since movable assets produce more income than other assets and lend themselves much more easily to satisfying the passions of the moment.[v]

Once divided, great landed estates are never reassembled; for the small landholder gains proportionately more revenue from his field[2] than the large landholder; so he sells it at a much higher price than the large landholder. Thus the economic calculations that brought a rich man to sell vast properties, will prevent him, with all the more reason, from buying small properties in order to reassemble large estates.[w]

What is called family spirit is often based on an illusion of individual

t. "Ask Livingston if in the United States there is still the possibility of establishing entails [in English in the text (ed.)]" (YTC, CVb, p. 33).

u. See the conversation with Mr. Latrobe (YTC, BIIa and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 109).

v. In *L'Irlande,* Beaumont will recommend the law of equal division as the way to divide property and socially weaken the English aristocracy of Ireland (see especially vol. II, pp. 191–200). Beaumont, like Tocqueville, had also observed in the United States the effects of the inheritance law (cf. in particular two letters, dated respectively July 4 and September 31, 1831, *Lettres d'Amérique,* pp. 80 and 147).

2. *I do not mean that the small landholder cultivates better, but he cultivates with more enthusiasm and care, and gains by work what he lacks in skill.*

w. In the margin: "≠The inheritance law acts much more forcefully on the destruction of landed fortunes than of fortunes in general.≠"

egoism.[x] A person seeks to perpetuate and, in a way, to immortalize himself in his great-nephews.[y] Where family spirit ends, individual egoism reverts to its true inclinations. Since the family no longer enters the mind except as something vague, indeterminate, and uncertain, each man concentrates on present convenience; he considers the establishment of the generation immediately following, and nothing more.

So a person does not try to perpetuate his family, or at least he tries to perpetuate it by means other than landed property.

Thus, not only does the inheritance law make it difficult for families to keep the same estates intact, but also it removes the desire to try and leads families, in a way, to cooperate in their own ruin.

The law of equal division proceeds in two ways: by acting on the thing, it acts on the man; by acting on the man, it affects the thing.

In these two ways it succeeds in profoundly attacking landed property and in making families as well as fortunes rapidly disappear.[3]

Surely it is not up to us, the French of the nineteenth century, daily witnesses to the political and social changes that the inheritance law brings about, to question its power. Each day we see it constantly move back and forth over our soil, toppling in its path the walls of our dwellings and de-

x. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not believe that the word *egoism* is the right word here. Egoism is only concerned with the present and does not rush toward the future. The word *pride* would seem more suitable to me."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "I find the word *egoism* good" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 95).

y. Note in pencil in the manuscript that seems to speak about a first version that lacked the sentence to which this note refers: "≠Think about this. A bad inference could be drawn from it, too generalized.≠"

3. *Since land is the most secure property, there are, from time to time, wealthy men who are inclined to make great sacrifices to acquire it and who willingly lose a considerable portion of their income in order to assure the rest. But these are accidents. The love of landed property is no longer usually found except among the poor. The small landholder, who is less enlightened and who has less imagination and fewer passions than the large landholder, is generally preoccupied only with the desire to enlarge his domain; and it often happens that inheritance, marriage or turns of fortune in trade provide him the means little by little.*

So alongside the tendency that brings men to divide the land, there exists another that brings them to consolidate it. This tendency, which is enough to prevent property from being infinitely divided, is not strong enough to create great territorial fortunes, nor above all to keep them in the same families.

stroying the hedges of our fields. But if the inheritance law has already accomplished much among us, much still remains for it to do. Our memories, opinions, and habits present it with powerful obstacles.[z]

In the United States, its work of destruction is nearly finished. That is where its principal results can be studied.

English legislation on the transmission of property was abolished in nearly all the states at the time of the Revolution.

The law of entail was modified so as to interfere only imperceptibly with the free circulation of property.[a] G

z. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> What are these obstacles? I do not know them. In France there are scarcely 2,000 families who give a double portion to the eldest son, and each day that becomes rarer. Equality of affection toward the children predominates. The law of primogeniture revolted even those who benefited from it. It was one of the most active causes of the July Revolution. So you should say what these obstacles are, because the truth of the phrase is not apparent (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 96).

a. [Note] "≠Here citation of Kent and analysis of Lippitt and then a remark on how the French laws on inheritance and entail are more democratic than the American laws.≠" Cf. note G.

In 1834, Tocqueville felt the need to have help in the organization and reading of American books, brochures and codes. The following advertisement is found in one of the notebooks of the copyist Bonnel:

> Looking for an American from the United States who has received a liberal education, who would like to do research in the political laws and the historical works of his country and who, for two months, could sacrifice two or three hours of his time each day for this work. Choice of hours would be left to him.
>
> Apply to M. A[lexis (ed.)]. de T[ocqueville (ed.)]. rue de V[erneuil (ed.)]. n. 49, before ten in the morning or in the afternoon between two and four.
>
> Five copies (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 85).

This advertisement seems not to have been published. Francis Lippitt states that he was hired on the recommendation of the American delegation in Paris by Nathaniel Niles or Edward Livingston probably. In a letter to Daniel Gilman (reproduced in Daniel C. Gilman, "Alexis de Tocqueville and his book on America, sixty years after," *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine,* 56, May–October 1898, pp. 703–15), Francis Lippitt asserts that his work consisted of reading and summarizing books, newspaper clippings and legal collections. Theodore Sedgwick, another American who had helped the author, unquestionably had a more important role. His conversations seem to have been useful

The first generation disappeared; landed estates began to divide. As time went by, the movement became more and more rapid [as a stone thrown from the top of a tower accelerates as it moves through space]. Today, when hardly sixty years have gone by, the appearance of society is already unrecognizable; the families of the great landed proprietors are almost entirely engulfed by the common mass. In the state of New York, which had a very large number of such families, two barely stay afloat above the abyss ready to swallow them.[b] Today, the sons of these opulent citizens are businessmen, lawyers, doctors. Most have fallen into the most profound obscurity. The last trace of hereditary rank and distinction is destroyed; the law of inheritance has done its leveling everywhere.[c]

It is not that there are no rich in the United States as there are elsewhere; I do not even know of a country where the love of money holds a greater place in the human heart and where a deeper contempt is professed for the theory of the permanent equality of property.[d] But wealth circulates there with incredible rapidity, and experience teaches that it is rare to see two generations reap the rewards of wealth.[e] [{The people are like the divinity of this new world; everything emanates from and returns to them.}]

to Tocqueville while drafting certain points of the book. (Also see, George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 731–34.)

b. [Note] "≠The Livingstons and the Van Rensselaers.≠"

c. At the time of his voyage, Tocqueville met Charles Carroll, signatory of the Declaration of Independence and one of the wealthiest Americans of the time. On November 8, 1831, Tocqueville, in a draft of a letter to an unidentified recipient, noted concerning him: "[Charles Carroll], a little old man of 95 years, straight as an arrow, . . . saw all the great families disappear as a result of the new inheritance law. For sixty years he has seen their descendants grow poorer, the noble families disappear, and the democracy take hold of the power that the great landholders held in his time" (YTC, BIa2).

d. In the margin: "≠Put here, I think, the inequality arising from the accumulation of the personal wealth of *manufacturing.*≠"

e. Democracy./

What is most important for democracy, is not that there are no great fortunes; it is that great fortunes do not rest in the same hands. In this way, there are the rich, but they do not form a class.

Commerce, industry perhaps create larger individual fortunes in America now than sixty years ago. However, the abolition of primogeniture and entail make de-

This picture, however colored you think it is, still gives only an incomplete idea of what is happening in the new states of the West and Southwest.[f]

At the end of the last century, hardy adventurers began to penetrate the valleys of the Mississippi. This was like a new discovery of America: soon the bulk of emigration went there; you saw unknown societies suddenly emerge from the wilderness. States, whose names did not even exist a few years before, took a place within the American Union. [<≠Hardly a year passed without the republic being forced to have some new star attached to its flag.≠>] In the West democracy can be observed carried to its extreme limit. In these states, in a way improvised by chance, the inhabitants arrived but yesterday on the soil they occupy. They scarcely know each other, and each one is unaware of the history of his closest neighbor. So in this part of the American continent, the population escapes not only from the influence of great names and great wealth, but also from the natural aristocracy that arises from enlightenment and virtue. There, no one exercises the power that men grant out of respect for an entire life spent in doing good before their eyes. The new states of the West already have inhabitants; society still does not exist.

mocracy, its passions, interests, maxims, tastes more powerful in our time than sixty years ago.

Furthermore, equality of political rights has introduced a powerful new element of democracy.

American societies had always been democratic by their nature; the Revolution made democratic principles pass into the laws (YTC, CVe, pp. 60–61).

f. Hervé de Tocqueville:

This transition needs revision. The picture that precedes relates to the effect of the law of equal division and has no relation whatsoever to the new states of the West. I think that you should say: what we have said about the equality of fortunes and rank in the East and in the South gives only an incomplete idea of the way it is established in the *new states,* etc. Here I offer a thought. The author must not be afraid of sometimes saying a few words that recall what precedes. These are resting points for the imagination, which put it back on track, and ease the work of comparing ideas already expressed with those which are being presented (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 97).

But not only fortunes are equal in America; to a certain degree, equality extends to minds themselves.

I do not think there is any country in the world where, in proportion to the population, there exist so small a number of ignorant and fewer learned men than in America.

There primary education is available to every one; higher education is hardly available to anyone.

This is easily understood and is, so to speak, the necessary result of what we advanced above.

Nearly all Americans live comfortably; so they can easily gain the primary elements of human knowledge.

In America, there are few rich [≠and the rich do not form a class apart. The consequences of this fact in relation to education are of several kinds.≠]; nearly all Americans need to have an occupation. Now, every occupation requires an apprenticeship. So Americans can devote only the first years of life to general cultivation of the mind; at age fifteen, they begin a career; most often, therefore, their education concludes when ours begins. If pursued further, it is directed only toward a specialized and lucrative field; they study a field of knowledge in the way they prepare for a trade; and they take only the applications recognized to have immediate utility.

In America, most of the rich began by being poor; nearly all the men of leisure were busy men in their youth. The result is that when they could have the taste for study, they do not have the time to devote themselves to it; and when they have gained the time, they no longer have the taste.

So in America no class exists that honors intellectual work and in which the penchant for intellectual pleasures is handed down with affluence and hereditary leisure.

Both the will and the power to devote oneself to this work are therefore missing.

In America a certain middling level of human knowledge is established. All minds have approached it; some by rising, others by falling.

So you meet a great multitude of individuals who have about the same number of notions in matters of religion, history, the sciences, political economy, legislation, and government.

Intellectual inequality comes directly from God, and man cannot prevent it from always reappearing.

But it follows, at least from what we have just said, that minds, while still remaining unequal as the Creator intended, find equal means at their disposal. Thus, today in America, the aristocratic element, always feeble since its birth, is, if not destroyed, at least weakened further; so it is difficult to assign it any influence whatsoever in the course of public affairs.

Time, events, and the laws have, on the contrary, made the democratic element not only preponderant but also, so to speak, unique. No family or group influence can be seen; often not even an individual influence, no matter how ephemeral, can be found.

[{Society there [is (ed.)] profoundly and radically democratic in its religion, ideas, habits, and passions.g}

≠For a people that has reached such a social state, mixed governments are more or less impractical; hardly any choice exists for them other than absolute power or a republic [v: sovereignty of the people].

America found itself in circumstances fortunate for escaping despotism and favorable for adopting a republic.≠]

So America presents, in its social state, the strangest phenomenon. There, men appear more equal in fortune and in mind or, in other words, more equal in strength than they are in any other country in the world and have been in any century that history remembers.

g. In the margin, with a bracket uniting this paragraph with the two preceding ones: "≠To sacrifice, I think, because all of that implies something more than the social state. Ask G[ustave (ed.)]. and L[ouis (ed.)].≠"

Political Consequences of the Social State of the Anglo-Americans

The political consequences of such a social state are easy to deduce.

It is impossible to think that, in the end, equality would not penetrate the political world as it does elsewhere. You cannot imagine men, equal in all other ways, forever unequal to each other on a single point; so in time they will become equal in all ways.

Now I know only two ways to have equality rule in the political world: rights must either be given to each citizen or given to no one [and apart from the government of the United States I see nothing more democratic than the empire of the great lord].[TN 2]

For peoples who have arrived at the same social state as the Anglo-Americans, it is therefore very difficult to see a middle course between the sovereignty of all [v: of the people] and the absolute power of one man [v: of a king].

[≠So peoples who have a similar social state are faced with a frightening alternative; they must choose between the sovereignty of the people and the absolute power of a king≠].

We must not hide from the fact that the social state I have just described lends itself almost as easily to the one as to the other of these two consequences.

There is in fact a manly and legitimate passion for equality that incites men to want to be strong and esteemed. This passion tends to elevate the small to the rank of the great. But in the human heart a depraved taste for equality is also found that leads the weak to want to bring the strong down to their level and that reduces men to preferring equality in servitude to inequality in liberty. Not that peoples whose social state is democratic naturally scorn liberty; on the contrary, they have an instinctive taste for it. But liberty is not the principal and constant object of their desire; what they love with undying love is equality; they rush toward liberty by rapid impulses and sudden efforts, and if they miss the goal, they resign them-

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE 2: Here Tocqueville probably means the Sultan.

selves; but without equality nothing can satisfy them, and rather than lose it, they would agree to perish.[h]

On the other hand, when citizens are all more or less equal, it becomes difficult for them to defend their independence against the aggressions of power. Since none among them is then strong enough to struggle alone with any advantage, it is only the combination of the strength of all that can guarantee liberty. Now, such a combination is not always found.[j]

Peoples can therefore draw two great political consequences from the same social state; these consequences differ prodigiously, but they both arise from the same fact.

The first to be subjected to this fearful alternative that I have just described, the Anglo-Americans have been fortunate enough to escape absolute power. Circumstances, origin, enlightenment, and above all, mores have allowed them to establish[k] and to maintain the sovereignty of the people.[m]

h. Hervé de Tocqueville:

All of this paragraph is extremely obscure. I do not know if I understood it, but it does not seem very correct to me. Men want to be equal not in order to be strong and respected, but out of human pride, out of a more or less well understood sentiment of human dignity. Nor is it because the weak want to *draw* or rather *lower* the strong to their level that servitude is established. Servitude is a state of degradation that is never the choice of any nation or any fragment of a nation. It results from the vices of the nation from which liberty is escaping because the nation did not know how to use liberty or is cowardly enough not to know how to rid itself of a tyrant. Fatigue or cowardice, degradation or disgust, such are the causes of servitude; it does not come about because men prefer equality in servitude to inequality in liberty. Among them, it is not preference, but objection (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 98–99).

j. In the version put at the disposal of the family, the sentence continues as follows: ". . . such a combination is not always found. It happens that they resign themselves without difficulty to servitude" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 100–101).

k. In another version, in the margin: ". . . mores, ≠this hidden will of God that is called chance≠, have allowed them . . ."

m. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Erase the word *establish.* The sovereignty of the aggregation of all the individuals of a nation that is called the people is not established, for this sovereignty exists by itself and everywhere. Even in Turkey, it strangles the sultan; in Spain, the Cortes is needed to sanction a change in the inheritance of the throne" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 99).

CHAPTER 4

Of the Principle of the Sovereignty of the People in America

It dominates all of American society.—Application that the Americans already made of this principle before their Revolution.—Development that the Revolution gave to it.—Gradual and irresistible lowering of the property qualification.

When you want to talk about the political laws of the United States, you must always begin with the dogma of the sovereignty of the people.[a]

The principle of the sovereignty of the people, which is more or less always found at the base of nearly all human institutions, ordinarily remains there as if buried. It is obeyed without being recognized, or if sometimes it happens, for a moment, to be brought into the full light of day, people soon rush to push it back into the shadows of the sanctuary.

The national will is one of those terms abused most widely by schemers of all times and despots of all ages. Some have seen it expressed in votes bought from the brokers of power; others in the votes of an interested or fearful minority. There are even some who have discovered it fully formulated in the silence of the people and who have thought that from the *fact* of obedience came, for them, the *right* of command.[b]

In America, the principle of the sovereignty of the people is not hidden or sterile as it is in certain nations [a vain show and a false principle as among

a. *"Sovereignty of the people* and *democracy* are two perfectly correlative words; the one represents the theoretical idea, the other its practical realization" (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 22).

b. In the margin, with a bracket enclosing the entire paragraph: "≠{This seems trite to me.}≠"

certain others; it is a legal and omnipotent fact that rules the entire society; that spreads freely and reaches its fullest consequences without obstacles]; it is recognized by the mores, proclaimed by the laws; it spreads freely and reaches its fullest consequences without obstacles.

If there is a single country in the world where the true value of the dogma of the sovereignty of the people can hope to be appreciated, where its application to the affairs of society can be studied and where its advantages and dangers can be judged, that country is assuredly America.

I said before that, from the beginning, the principle of the sovereignty of the people had been the generative principle of most of the English colonies of America.

It then fell far short, however, of dominating the government of society as it does today.

Two obstacles, one external, one internal, slowed its invasive march.

It could not appear openly in the laws because the colonies were still forced to obey the home country; so it was reduced to hiding in the provincial assemblies and especially in the town. There it spread in secret.

American society at that time was not yet ready to adopt it in all its consequences. For a long time, learning in New England and wealth south of the Hudson, exercised, as I showed in the preceding chapter, a sort of aristocratic influence that tended to confine the exercise of social powers to a few hands. It still fell far short of electing all public officials and of making all citizens, voters. Everywhere the right to vote was restricted to certain limits and subordinated to the existence of a property qualification which was very low in the North and more considerable in the South.[c]

The American Revolution broke out. The dogma of the sovereignty of the people emerged from the town and took over the government;[d] all

c. To the side, with a note: "{Know exactly the state of things on this point.}"

d. The manuscript says: "{and occupied the throne}." A note in pencil in the margin specifies: "≠The word throne does not seem to me the right word since it concerns a republic.≠"

classes took risks for its cause; they fought and triumphed in its name; it became the law of laws.[e]

e. Of the sovereignty of the people./

I draw a great difference between the right of a people to choose its government, and the right that each individual among this people would have to take part in the government.

The first proposition seems to me to contain an incontestable truth; the second, a manifest error.

I cannot acknowledge the absolute right of each man to take an active part in the affairs of his country, and I am astonished that this doctrine, so contradictory to the ordinary course of human affairs, could be proposed.

What is more precious to man than his liberty? It is recognized, however, that society can take liberty away from one of its members who makes poor use of it.

What is more natural [than (ed.)] to manage your own property? All peoples have recognized, however, that, before a certain age and in certain [missing word (ed.)], this control could be withdrawn, because it was thought [that (ed.)] these individuals either did not yet have or had never had the judgment necessary to make good use of this power. And would this faculty of judgment that some individuals are found to lack for conducting themselves then be granted to everyone for conducting the affairs of society? The constitutions that have apparently been founded on the doctrine that I am combating have never dared to admit all of its consequences. Even in the United States the poor man who pays no taxes obeys laws to which he has consented neither directly nor indirectly. How does that happen if the right to be involved in the affairs of government is a right inherent in the nature of man?

So all questions of democracy and aristocracy (aristocracy as a ruling body), of monarchy and republic, are not questions of right, but questions of fact, or rather the question of fact always precedes the other. Show me a people in which all the citizens may be involved in the government and, in my eyes, this people will have the right to govern itself democratically. Imagine another, if you can, in which no class or citizen may have the required capacity; and although I hardly like the power of one man alone, I will grant that it is legitimate and will take care to live elsewhere.

[In the margin: How so? If you recognize that some of the individuals who compose a people are incapable of taking part in its government, how even more would they be able to make a good choice? Now, if you remove some from this choice, it is no longer the people who choose. Moreover, from the moment you recognize that some can be incapable of choosing well, you must imagine a social state where no one could choose well; and then you are moving even further from the maxim that all people have the right to choose their government. Everything is reduced to this: to choose a government and to take part in government, these are two analogous products of human judgment. It is difficult entirely to concede the one while entirely refusing the other.

A change almost as rapid was carried out within the interior of society. The law of inheritance completed the dismantling of local influences.

At the moment when this effect of the laws and of the revolution began to be evident to all, victory had already been irrevocably declared in favor of democracy. Power was in fact in its hands. Even struggling against it was no longer permitted. So the upper classes submitted without a murmur and without a fight to an evil henceforth inevitable. What usually happens to powers that are in decline happened to them: individual egoism took hold of the members of the upper classes.[f] Since force could no longer be wrested from the hands of the people and since they did not detest the multitude enough to take pleasure in defying it, they came to think only of winning

Response:

Judgment is necessary to choose a good government. But only intelligence and experience are needed to find that an existing government is not suitable and that it should be changed.] (YTC, CVh, 5, pp. 4–6). Cf. Guizot, tenth lecture, entitled *De la représentation,* in *Journal des cours publics de jurisprudence, histoire et belles-lettres* (Paris: au bureau du journal, 1821–1822, vol. II, especially pages 131–33). Also see note c of pp. 99–100.

f. Hervé de Tocqueville:

I do not know if Alexis has grasped all the causes of this phenomenon. I indicated one in the remarks on the preceding chapter that I ask him to think about. To know if the necessity to recompense soldiers has not obligated leaders to grant them rights; perhaps even a sentiment more noble than necessity, gratitude. Afterwards, democratic appetites have grown. I see in note 2 of chapter III that only in 1786 has equal division been established in New York, from where it has spread throughout the Union. Nor do I know if individual egoism can suddenly dominate an entire class in such a way as to make it give up its most precious advantages. Something else is involved there other than just the desire to please the multitude. There is always in my mind a difficulty that I do not believe I have expressed clearly enough. In the beginning the position of the settlers in each state was identical, whether it appeared aristocratic or democratic. There was no "people"; how was "the people" formed so that there was a mass demanding concessions alongside a mass that granted them? I believe that Alexis should have said something about it in the first chapter.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Doesn't inequality come from the lack of inheritance laws?" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 89–90).

Was Hervé thinking here of Montesquieu? Cf. *Considérations sur la cause de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1951), II, chapter XIII, p. 142.

its good will at any cost. [≠Moreover, men have at their disposal such a deep reservoir of baseness, that it is always found more or less the same in the service of all despots, whether people or king.≠] In an effort to outdo each other, the most democratic laws were then voted by the men whose interests were most damaged by them. In this way, the upper classes did not incite [{implacable}] popular passions against themselves; but they themselves hastened the triumph of the new order. So, a strange thing! The democratic impulse showed itself that much more irresistible in the states where aristocracy had more roots.

The state of Maryland, which had been founded by great lords, was the first to proclaim universal suffrage[1] and introduced the most democratic forms into its whole government.[g]

When a people begins to tamper with the electoral qualification, you can foresee that, after a more or less long delay, it will make that qualification disappear completely. That is one of the most invariable rules that govern societies. As the limit of electoral rights is pushed back, the need grows to push it further; for, after each new concession, the forces of democracy increase and its demands grow with its new power. [It is the history of the Romans buying peace with gold.[h]] The ambition of those left below the electoral qualification is aroused in proportion to the great number of those who are found above. Finally, the exception becomes the rule; concessions

1. *Amendments made to the constitution of Maryland in 1801 and 1809.*

g. Hervé de Tocqueville

The history of the great lords who founded the colony of Maryland bothers me because it implies a contradiction with what Alexis says about the original equality that was established at first in the states of the Union. I know that this contradiction is only apparent, but it leaves some suspicion in the mind. Alexis must clearly explain how and why the ideas, pretensions, etc. of these great lords were absorbed right away by the influence of the spirit of equality spread throughout the Union (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 108).

h. Hervé de Tocqueville: "The example does not seem to me to relate to the subject" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 90). These are the very words of Montesquieu. *Considération sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1951), II, chapter XVIII, p. 171.

follow one after the other without letup, and there is no more stopping until universal suffrage is reached.[j]

Today in the United States the principle of the sovereignty of the people has attained all the practical developments that imagination can conceive. It has been freed from all the fictions that have been carefully placed around it elsewhere; it is seen successively clothed in all forms according to the necessity of the case. Sometimes the people as a body make the laws as at Athens; sometimes the deputies created by universal suffrage represent the people and act in their name under their almost immediate supervision.

There are countries where a power, in a way external to the social body, acts on it and forces it to follow a certain path.

There are others where force is divided, being simultaneously inside and outside the society. Nothing of the sort is seen in the United States; there society acts by itself and on itself. Power exists only inside it;[k] hardly anyone may even be found who dares to conceive and especially to express the idea of seeking power elsewhere. The people participate in the composition of

j. In a letter to an unknown recipient, Tocqueville again takes up some arguments expressed at the time of a conversation with Charles Carroll:

> But, I replied, the Revolution over, what forced you to destroy English institutions and to establish democracy among yourselves?—"We were divided after the victory," responded Ch[arles (ed.)]. Carroll. "Each party wanted to use the people and, to gain their adherence, granted them new privileges, until finally the people became our master and showed us all the door."
>
> What do you think of this apology? Doesn't it have the air of being said in Paris toward the end of 1830 or at the very least in the course of the year of grace 1831? I am, however, a very faithful narrator (Draft of a letter of Tocqueville dated November 8, 1831, YTC, BIa2).

k. A symbol in the text refers to the following note: "Place a chapter here explaining what is called a constitution in America. Say that it is only a changing expression of the sovereignty of the people, that has nothing of the perpetual, that binds only until it is amended. Difference from what is understood by constitution in Europe, even in England.

[In the margin: Ask advice here.]"

the laws[m] by the choice of the legislators, in their application by the election of the agents of executive power. It can be said that they govern themselves, so weak and restricted is the part left to the administration, so much does the administration feel its popular origin and obey the power from which it emanates. The people rule the American political world as God rules the universe. They are the cause and the end of all things; everything arises from them and everything is absorbed by them.[H]

m. In the manuscript: "The people enter into the composition of the laws . . ." Hervé de Tocqueville:

> I keep repeating the same objection, for it strikes me at every step. What is "the people" in a society where, as much as possible, ranks, fortunes, and minds approach the level of equality? Assuredly, in the New World the word *people* has none of the same meaning as among us. I believe that a sense of this must be given somewhere. Otherwise, the chapter moves along very well.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "I understand the preceding objection when it involved explaining the successive formation of American society; but here it isn't the same thing anymore. Alexis describes the government of democracy, and in this case the word *people* is appropriate and is perfectly understood. This entire passage seems remarkable to me" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 90).

CHAPTER 5

Necessity of Studying What Happens in the Individual States before Speaking about the Government of the Union[a]

The following chapter is intended to examine what form government founded on the principle of sovereignty of the people takes in America, what its means of action, difficulties, advantages and dangers are.[b]

A first difficulty arises: the United States has a complex constitution. You notice two distinct societies there, bound together and, if I can explain it in this way, nested like boxes one inside the other. Two completely separate and nearly independent governments are seen: the one, habitual and undefined, which answers to the daily needs of the society; the other, exceptional and circumscribed, which applies only to certain general interests. They are, in a word, twenty-four small sovereign nations, that together form the great body of the Union.

To examine the Union before studying the state is to embark on a path strewn with difficulties. The form of the federal government in the United States appeared last; it was only a modification of the republic, a summary of political principles spread throughout the entire society before the federal government existed, and subsisting there independently of it. As I have just said, the federal government is, moreover, only an exception; the government of the states is the common rule. The writer who would like to

a. According to a rough draft (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 83), this section would at first have constituted an independent chapter.

b. In the margin: "≠Perhaps immediately after having treated the sovereignty of the people, it would be necessary to talk about election, which is its first and most complete application to the government of society.≠"

show such a picture as a whole before pointing out its details would necessarily lapse into obscurities and repetitions.

There can be no doubt that the great political principles that govern American society today arose and developed in the *state.* So to have the key to all the rest, the state must be understood.

The states that make up the American Union today all look the same with regard to the external appearance of institutions. Political and administrative life there is found concentrated in three centers of action that could be compared to the various nerve centers that make the human body move.

At the first level is found the *town*;[TN 3] higher, the *county;* finally, the *state.*

Of the Town System in America[c]

Why the author begins the examination of political institutions with the town.—The town is found among all peoples.—Difficulty of establishing and maintaining town liberty.—

Translator's Note 3: I have translated *commune,* when it refers to America, as *town* rather than *township. Town* is, by far, the more common term in the United States, especially in New England. And American historians almost unanimously use the term *town.* When *commune* refers to France, I have usually left it in French, italicized.

c. When he starts on the study of the American administration, Tocqueville realizes that he hardly knows that of his own country. In the month of October 1831, he asks his father and two of his colleagues, Ernest de Chabrol and Ernest de Blosseville, to draw up for him a summary sketch of the French administration. Tocqueville writes to his father:

> Nothing would be more useful to me for judging America well than to know France. But it is this last point that is missing; I know in general that among us the government gets into nearly everything; a hundred times people have blared into my ears the word *centralization,* without explaining it to me. . . . If you could, my dear papa, analyze for me this word *centralization,* you would help me immensely (letter to his father, New York, 7 October 1831, YTC, BIa2).

In reply, Hervé de Tocqueville sends his son a long report bearing the title *Coup d'oeil sur l'administration française* [*Brief View of the French Administration*]. There the former prefect develops several of the ideas presented in *De la charte provinciale* (Paris: J. J. Blaise, 1829, 62 pp.). After several pages devoted to description of the administration,

Its importance.—Why the author has chosen the town organization of New England as the principal object of his examination.

Not by chance do I first examine the town.

[≠The town is the first element of the societies out of which peoples take form; it is the social molecule; if I can express myself in this way, it is the embryo that already represents and contains the seed of the complete being.≠]

the author considers in detail the problem of centralization and the way to lessen its abuses. Hervé de Tocqueville, who fears that the autonomy of the French *communes* [towns] will divide the country into a multitude of small republics, insists a great deal on the fact that the King must exercise the administration and have the right to dissolve the *conseils communaux* [town councils]. But he recognizes, nonetheless, the extreme slowness of an excessively centralized administration and recommends the creation of special juries for the purpose of deciding administrative questions as the most effective means to accelerate decision making. In his response, Chabrol considers, above all, the question of administrative jurisdiction. Macarel had in fact pointed out to him that the majority of trials between the administration and individuals that were judged by the *conseils municipaux* [municipal councils] were trials of an ordinary type that could have been judged according to the forms of the ordinary judicial system. Chabrol also points out that a large part of the administration still carries the trace of the centralizing concepts of the Napoleonic administration. The report of Blosseville, shorter and less precise than the other two, allows for the shift of administrative trials to ordinary jurisdiction, in agreement with Chabrol. (A copy of the three reports is found at Yale, under the classification CIIIa).

For the preparation of this chapter, the report on the local administration of New England, written by Jared Sparks for Alexis de Tocqueville, also has considerable importance. On this document and *Brief View of the French Administration,* see George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 403–13. Finally, there is a note by Beaumont that relates an interesting conversation with Sparks (in Beaumont, *Lettres d'Amérique,* pp. 152–54). The questions posed by Tocqueville to Jared Sparks and the responses of the latter have been published by H. B. Adams in *Jared Sparks and Alexis de Tocqueville, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science,* XVIth series, n. 12, 1898. A rough draft with several notes for this chapter also contains numerous references to the report of Sparks (YTC, CVb, p. 17). It is Jared Sparks who points out to Tocqueville that Nathaniel Niles, Secretary of the American delegation in Paris and native of New England, can be useful to him for the chapter on the town administration of this part of the United States. It seems that, following this suggestion, Tocqueville contacted the latter (see note v for p. 62).

The town is the only association that is so much a part of nature that wherever men are gathered together, a town takes shape by itself.

Town society exists therefore among all peoples no matter what their customs and their laws; it is man who establishes kingdoms and creates republics; the town seems to come directly from the hands of God. [≠The town is not only the first of social elements, but also the most important of all.≠] But if the town has existed ever since there have been men, town liberty is something rare and fragile.[d] A people can always establish great political assemblies, because it usually contains a certain number of men among whom, to a certain degree, enlightenment takes the place of the practice of public affairs. The town is made up of crude elements that often resist the action of the legislator. Instead of diminishing as nations become more enlightened, the difficulty of establishing town independence increases with their enlightenment. A highly civilized society tolerates the trial efforts of town liberty only with difficulty; it rebels at the sight of its numerous errors and despairs of success before having reached the final result of the experiment.

Of all liberties, town liberty, which is so difficult to establish, is also the most exposed to the encroachments of power. Left to themselves, town institutions could scarcely resist a strong and enterprising government; to defend themselves successfully, they must have reached their

d. In the margin:

Cause of its little importance. The coarse elements that it brings into use. It can hardly arise except during little developed centuries when individuality is the first need.

The town puts liberty and government within the grasp of the people; it gives them an education or creates great national assemblies.

A town system is made only with the support of mores, laws, circumstances and time.

Town liberty is the most difficult to suppress, the most difficult to create.

It is in the town that nearly all the strength of free peoples resides./

It is in the town that the liberty of peoples resides. Makes kingdoms and creates republics.≠ Cf. conversation with Mr. Gray (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa and *Voyages, OC,* V, 1, pp. 94–95).

fullest development and be mingled with national ideas and habits. Thus, as long as town liberty has not become part of the mores, it is easy to destroy; and it can become part of the mores only after existing in the laws for a long time.

Town liberty therefore escapes human effort so to speak. Consequently it is rarely created;[e] in a sense it arises by itself. It develops almost in secret[f] within a semi-barbaric society. The continuous action of laws and of mores, circumstances, and above all time succeed in its consolidation. You can say that, of all the nations of the European continent, not a single one knows town liberty.

The strength of free peoples resides in the town, however. Town institutions are to liberty what primary schools are to knowledge; they put it within the grasp of the people; they give them a taste of its peaceful practice and accustom them to its use. Without town institutions, a nation can pretend to have a free government, but it does not possess the spirit of liberty.[g] Temporary passions, momentary interests, the chance of circumstances can give it the external forms of independence; but des-

e. In his report on Algeria to the Chamber of Deputies ("Rapport fait par M. de Tocqueville sur le projet de loi relatif aux crédits extraordinaires demandés pour l'Algérie" and discussions on Algeria, *Moniteur universel,* 24, 25 May, 1, 9, 10, 11, 12 June 1847, reproduced in *OCB,* IX, pp. 423–512 and in *Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, pp. 308–409), Tocqueville insists, nonetheless, on the necessity of creating town institutions in Algeria. He sees it as a condition of the French colonial presence in that country (*Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, p. 352). See Seymour Drescher, *Dilemmas of Democracy: Tocqueville and Modernization* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968), p. 61.

f. Hervé de Tocqueville: "This does not seem to me to agree very well with what precedes. How does it develop almost in secret, if it has subsisted for a long time in the laws?" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 84).

g. In his notes on the government of India, Tocqueville sees in the permanence and power of the town the reason for the survival of Hindu culture through revolution and the lack of interest in general politics: "The entire political life of the Indians withdrew into the town; the entire administration was concentrated there. As long as the town still existed, who controlled the empire was of little importance to the inhabitants. They hardly noticed the change of masters" (*Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, p. 450).

potism, driven back into the interior of the social body, reappears sooner or later at the surface.

To make the reader understand well the general principles on which the political organization of the town and the county in the United States rests, I thought that it was useful to take one state in particular as a model, to examine in detail what happens there, and then to cast a quick glance over the rest of the country.

I have chosen one of the states of New England.

The town and the county are not organized in the same way in all the parts of the Union; it is easy to recognize, however, that throughout the Union the same principles, more or less, have presided over the formation of both.

[≠The town institutions of New England were the first to reach a state of maturity. They present a complete and uniform whole. They serve as a model for the other parts of the Union and tend more and more to become the standard to which all the rest must sooner or later conform.≠]

Now, it seemed to me that in New England these principles were considerably more developed and had attained further consequences than anywhere else. So they are, so to speak, more evident there and are thus more accessible to the observation of the foreigner.

The town institutions of New England form a complete and regular whole. They are old; they are strong because of the laws, stronger still because of the mores; they exercise a prodigious influence over the entire society.

In all these ways, they merit our attention.

Town District

The town in New England (*Township*) falls between the *canton* and the *commune* [town] in France. Generally it numbers from two to three thousand inhabitants.[1] So it is not too extensive for all its inhabitants to share

1. *In 1830, the number of towns, in the State of Massachusetts, was 305; the number of inhabitants 610,014; this gives an average of about 2,000 inhabitants per town.*

nearly the same interests; and on the other hand, it is populated enough to assure that elements of a good administration are always found within it.

Town Powers in New England

The people, source of all powers in the town as elsewhere.—There they deal with principal matters by themselves.—No town council.—The largest part of town authority concentrated in the hands of the selectmen.*—How the selectmen function.—General assembly of the inhabitants of the town (*Town Meeting*).—Enumeration of all the town officers.—Offices mandatory and paid.*

In the town as everywhere else, the people are the source of social powers, but nowhere else do they exercise their power more directly. In America, the people are a master who has to be pleased to the greatest possible degree.

In New England, the majority acts through representatives when the general affairs of the state must be dealt with. This was necessary; but in the town, where legislative and governmental action is closer to the governed, the law of representation is not accepted.[h] There is no town council; the body of voters, after naming their magistrates, directs them in everything that is not the pure and simple execution of the laws of the state.[2]

h. For Tocqueville, the lack of representation is the principal characteristic of the town; he gives the town a role similar to that of the small republic in the thought of Rousseau. If here he asserts that the lack of representation is a characteristic of the town across the Atlantic, in the *Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (*OC,* II, 1, pp. 119–20), he will admit that in the parish of the old regime he found the lack of political representation and other traits that he had formerly judged as belonging only to North America.

2. *The same rules do not apply to the large towns.*[j] *These generally have a mayor and a municipal body divided into two branches; but that is an exception that must be authorized by a law. See the law of 22 [23 (ed.)] February 1822, regulating the powers of the city of Boston.* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. II, p. 588. This applies to large cities. It also frequently*

This state of things is so contrary to our ideas, and so opposed to our habits, that it is necessary to provide a few examples here for it to be well understood.

Public offices are extremely numerous and highly divided in the town, as we will see below. The largest part of administrative powers is concentrated, however, in the hands of a small number of individuals elected annually who are called selectmen.[3]

The general laws of the state have imposed a certain number of obligations on the selectmen. To fulfill them they do not need the authorization of those under their jurisdiction, and they cannot avoid their obligations without engaging their personal responsibility. State law charges them, for example, with drawing up the electoral lists in their town; if they fail to do so, they make themselves guilty of a misdemeanor. But in all things that are left to the direction of the town authority, the selectmen are the executors of the popular will, as with us the mayor is the executor of the deliberations of the town council. Most often they act on their private responsibility and, in actual practice, only carry out the implications of principles previously set down by the majority. But if they want to introduce any change whatsoever in the established order, if they desire to pursue a new undertaking, they must return to the source of their power. Suppose that it is a question of establishing a school: the selectmen convoke on a

*happens that the small cities are subject to a special administration. In 1832, the State of New York numbered 104 towns administered in this way (*William's Register*).*

j. Hervé de Tocqueville:

Delete the note and transfer it to the end of the chapter. This note, while teaching us that the large towns have a different municipal system, interrupts, diminishes, and, in order to bring an imperfectly stated difference to our attention, diverts our interest. At the end of the chapter, a section on the municipal system of the large towns is needed. That is indispensable for the unity of the work and the satisfaction of the reader (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 84).

3. *Three are elected in the smallest towns; nine, in the largest. See* The Town Officer, *p. 186. Also see the principal laws of Massachusetts relative to the selectmen:*

Law of 20 February 1786, vol. I, p. 219;—24 February 1796, vol. I, p. 488;—7 March 1801, vol. II, p. 45;—16 June 1795, vol. I, p. 473;—12 March 1808, vol. II, p. 186;—28 February 1787, vol. I, p. 302;—22 June 1797, vol. I, p. 539.

given day, in a place specified in advance, the whole body of voters; there, they set forth the need that is felt; they show the means to satisfy it, the money that must be spent, the location that should be chosen. The assembly, consulted on all those points, adopts the principle, determines the location, votes the tax and puts the execution of its will into the hands of the selectmen.

Only the selectmen have the right to call the town meeting, but they can be made to do so. If ten property owners conceive a new project and want to submit it for approval by the town, they call for a general convocation of the inhabitants; the selectmen are obliged to agree to the call and only retain the right to preside over the meeting.[4]

Without a doubt, these political mores, these social customs are very far from us. At this moment I want neither to judge them nor to show the hidden causes that produce and animate them; I am limiting myself to presenting them.

The selectmen are elected annually in the month of April or May. At the same time the town meeting chooses a host of other town magistrates,[5] appointed for certain important administrative tasks.[k] Some, known as assessors, must determine the tax; others, known as collectors, must collect it. One officer, called the *constable,* is charged with keeping the peace, supervising public places and assuring the physical execution of the laws. Another, named the town clerk, records all deliberations; he keeps minutes of the acts of the civil registry. A treasurer keeps the town funds. Add to these officers an overseer of the poor, whose duty, very difficult to fulfill, is to enforce the laws relative to the poor; school commissioners, who direct public education; road surveyors, who are responsible for all the routine tasks relating to the roadways, large and small; and you will have the list of the principal agents of town administration. But the division of offices does

4. *See* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 250; law of 23 March 1786.*
5. Ibid.
k. In the margin: "≠What makes town spirit powerful./
"Independence of the town.
"Importance of the town.
"Constant political life.
"Division of town powers.≠"

not stop there. You still find, among the town officers,[6] parish commissioners who must regulate church expenses;[m] inspectors of various kinds, some charged with directing the efforts of citizens in case of fire; others, with overseeing the harvest; these, with temporarily relieving difficulties that can arise from fencing; those, with supervising wood allotments or with inspecting weights and measures.

In all, principal offices in the town number nineteen. Each inhabitant is obligated, under penalty of a fine, to accept these different offices; but also most of these offices are paid,[n] so that poor citizens can devote their time to them without suffering a loss. The American system, moreover, does not give any fixed salary to officers. In general, each act of their administration has a value, and they are remunerated only in proportion to what they have done.[o]

6. *All these magistrates actually exist in practice.*

To know the details of the duties of all of these town magistrates, see the book entitled Town Officer, *by Isaac Goodwin, Worcester 1829; and the collection of the general laws of Massachusetts in 3 vols., Boston, 1823.*

m. Tocqueville learned from Goodwin that in the United States the town inhabitants were obliged to contribute to the support of a Protestant minister. This seems to him nearly the sign of a State religion, and he says so to Sparks. Apparently in agreement, Sparks answers him: "It is one of those cases in which early prejudice, habit, and accidental causes, may pervert the sense of a majority and operate against the equal rights of the whole" (H. B. Adams, *Jared Sparks and Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 25).

n. The manuscript says: "paid, little it is true, but enough, however, so that poor citizens . . ."

o. I found myself in a Boston salon behind two respectable *gentlemen* who appeared to treat an important subject with interest:

"How much will that gain you much [*sic*]?" said one.

"It's a fairly good business," answered the other, "about one hundred dollars is given for each."

"As you say," replied the first, "that truly is a good business."

Now, it concerned nothing less than two pirates who were to be hanged the next day. One of these speakers, who was the *City Marshal,* was obliged by his position to be present at the execution and to see that everything was done according to order. The law allocated to him for his right to be present one hundred dollars for each one hanged; and he spoke of these two condemned men like a pair of cattle that he had to sell the next day at the market.

Told by the consul (alphabetic notebook B, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 241).

Of Town Life

Each person is the best judge of what concerns only himself alone.—Corollary of the principle of sovereignty of the people.—Application that the American towns make of these doctrines.—The New England town, sovereign in everything that concerns only itself, subject in everything else.—Obligation of the town toward the state.—In France, the government lends its agents to the town.—In America, the town lends its to the government.

I said previously that the principle of sovereignty of the people hovers over the entire political system of the Anglo-Americans. Each page of this book will show some new applications of this doctrine.

Among nations where the dogma of the sovereignty of the people reigns, each individual forms an equal portion of the sovereign power, and participates equally in the government of the state.

Each individual is therefore considered to be as enlightened, as virtuous, as strong as any of his fellows.

So why does he obey society, and what are the natural limits of this obedience?

He obeys society, not at all because he is inferior to those who direct it, or less capable than another man of governing himself; he obeys society because union with his fellows seems useful to him and because he knows that this union cannot exist without a regulatory power.

So in all that concerns the mutual duties of citizens, he has become a subject. In all that concerns only himself, he has remained the master; he is free and is accountable for his actions only to God. Thus this maxim, that the individual is the best as well as the only judge of his particular interest and that society has the right to direct his actions only when it feels harmed by them, or when it needs to call for his support.

This doctrine is universally accepted in the United States. Elsewhere I will examine what general influence it exercises over even the ordinary acts of life; but at this moment I am talking about the towns.

The town, taken as a whole and in relation to the central government,

is only an individual like any other to whom the theory I have just indicated applies.

Town liberty in the United States follows, therefore, from the very dogma of the sovereignty of the people. All the American republics have more or less recognized this independence; but among the people of New England, circumstances have particularly favored its development.

In this part of the Union, political life was born very much within the towns; you could almost say that at its origin each of them was an independent nation. When the Kings of England later demanded their share of sovereignty, they limited themselves to taking central power. They left the town in the situation where they found it; now the towns of New England are subjects; but in the beginning they were not or were scarcely so. They did not therefore receive their powers; on the contrary, they seem to have relinquished a portion of their independence in favor of the state; an important distinction which the reader must keep in mind.[p]

In general the towns are subject to the states only when an interest that I will call *social* is concerned, that is to say, an interest that the towns share with others.[q]

For everything that relates only to them alone, the towns have remained independent bodies. No one among the inhabitants of New England, I think, recognizes the right of the state government to intervene in the direction of purely town interests.[r]

So the towns of New England are seen to buy and sell, to sue and to defend themselves before the courts, to increase or reduce their budget

p. In the margin: "≠The dogma of sovereignty of the people, it must not be forgotten, has as its end not to make the people do all that they should want, but all that they do want.≠"

q. Cf. conversations with Sparks and Mr. Gray (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage,* p. 90, 96). See also H. B. Adams, *Jared Sparks and Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 18.

r. Earlier draft: "≠I do not believe anyone has ever dared to profess that the duty and the right of a government was to watch over the governed in such a paternal way that they could not even do what can be of harm only to themselves.≠"

without any administrative authority whatsoever thinking to oppose them.[7] [<≠This right has only a single limit. That is found in the institution of the judicial power, but we will examine it later.≠>]

As for social duties, they are required to fulfill them. Thus, if the state needs money, the town is not free to grant or to deny its cooperation.[8] If the state wants to open a road, the town does not have the right to close its territory. If it establishes a regulation concerning public order, the town must execute it. If it wants to organize education according to a uniform plan throughout the country, the town is required to create the schools desired by the law.[9] We will see, when we talk about administration in the United States, how and by whom the towns, in all these different cases, are forced to obey. Here I only want to establish the existence of the obligation. This obligation is strict, but the state government, while imposing it, only enacts a principle; for carrying out the principle, the town generally recovers all its rights of individuality. Thus, it is true that the tax is voted by the legislature, but it is the town that apportions and collects it; a school is prescribed, but it is the town that builds, funds and directs it.

In France the tax collector of the State levies the taxes of the town; in America the tax collector of the town raises the tax of the state.

With us, therefore, the central government lends its agents to the town; in America, the town lends its officers to the government. That alone makes clear to what degree the two societies differ.

Of Town Spirit in New England

Why the New England town attracts the affections of those who live there.—Difficulty met in Europe in creating town spirit.—Town rights and duties that work together in America to form this spirit.—The native land has a more distinctive

7. *See* Laws of Massachusetts, *law of 23 March 1786, vol. I, p. 250.*

8. Ibid., *law of 20 February 1786, vol. I, p. 217.*

9. *See the same collection, law of 2 June 1789, and 8 [10 (ed.)] March, 1827, vol. I, p. 367, and vol. III, p. 179.*

physiognomy in the United States than elsewhere.—How town spirit is shown in New England.—What fortunate effects it produces there.

[≠Laws act on mores; and mores, on laws. Wherever these two things do not lend each other mutual support, there is unrest, revolution tearing apart the society.

The legislation of New England constituted the town. Habits have completed the establishment of a true town spirit there.

The town is a center around which interests and passions gather and where real and sustained activity reigns.≠]

In America not only do town institutions exist, but also a town spirit that sustains and animates them.[s]

The New England town brings together two advantages that, wherever they are found, strongly excite the interest of men—namely, independence and power. It acts, it is true, within a circle that it cannot leave, but within that circle its movements are free. This independence alone would already give the town real importance even if its population and size would not assure its importance.

You must realize that in general the affections of men go only where strength is found. Love of native land does not reign for long in a conquered country.[t] The inhabitant of New England is attached to his town, not so much because he was born there as because he sees in this town a free and strong corporate body to which he belongs and which merits the trouble of trying to direct it.

In Europe the very people who govern often regret the absence of town spirit; for everyone agrees that town spirit is a great element of order and public tranquillity; but they do not know how to produce it. By making the town strong and independent, they fear dividing social power and exposing the State to anarchy. Now, take strength and independence away

s. In the margin: "<The person who focuses his affections and his hopes on the town, who knows how to take his place there and to participate in its governance, that person possesses what I call town spirit.>"

t. In the margin, in pencil, on a paper glued into place: "I do not know if this thought is very accurate. Witness, Poland."

from the town, and you will forever find there only people who are administered, not citizens.

Note, moreover, an important fact. The New England town is so constituted that it can serve as a center of strong affections, and at the same time there is nothing nearby that strongly attracts the ambitious passions of the human heart.

The officials of the county are not elected and their authority is limited. The state itself has only a secondary importance; its existence is indistinct and tranquil. To gain the right to administer it, few men agree to distance themselves from the center of their interests and to disrupt their existence.

The federal government confers power and glory on those who direct it; but the number of men who are able to influence its destiny is very small. The presidency is a high office that can hardly be attained except after reaching an advanced age. When someone reaches other high level federal offices, it is by chance in a way and after already becoming famous by pursuing another career.[u] Ambition cannot make these high offices the permanent aim of its efforts. [{The Union is a nearly ideal being that nothing represents to the mind.}][v] It is in the town, at the center of the ordinary relations of life, that the desire for esteem, the need for real interests, the taste for power and notice are focused. These passions, which so often trouble society, change character when they can operate thus near the domestic hearth and, in a way, within the family.

See with what art, in the American town, care has been taken to *scatter* power, if I can express myself in this way, in order to interest more people in public life. Apart from the voters called from time to time to perform the acts of government, how many diverse offices, how many different magistrates, who all, in the circle of their attributions, represent the powerful corporate body in whose name they act! How many men thus

u. The drafting of this sentence, and of the preceding one, is by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 68–69). In this chapter, Tocqueville seems to have largely taken into account numerous stylistic suggestions made by Beaumont.

v. In pencil in the margin: "≠There again, an idea that is a bit undeveloped and that consequently lacks clarity.≠"

exploit the power of the town for their profit and are interested in it for themselves!

Nor is the American system, even as it divides municipal power among a great number of citizens, afraid to multiply town duties. In the United States people think rightly that love of country is a kind of religious cult that attaches men by observances.

In this way, town life makes itself felt at every moment as it were; it manifests itself every day by the accomplishment of a duty or by the exercise of a right. This political existence imparts a continual, but at the same time peaceful, movement to society that agitates without troubling it.[w]

The Americans are attached to the city by a reason analogous to the one that makes mountain dwellers love their country. Among them the native land has marked and characteristic features; it has a more distinctive physiognomy than elsewhere.

In general the New England towns have a happy existence. Their government suits their taste and is their choice as well. Within the profound peace and material prosperity that reign in America, the storms of municipal life are few. Leadership of town interests is easy. The political education of the people, moreover, was done a long time ago, or rather they arrived already educated on the soil they occupy. In New England, division of ranks does not exist even in memory; so there is no portion of the town tempted to oppress the other, and injustices, which strike only isolated individuals, are lost in the general contentment. Should the government exhibit some faults, and certainly it is easy to point them out, they are not obvious to view, because the government truly derives from the governed. And it is sufficient for town government to operate, whether well or poorly, for it to be protected by a kind of paternal pride. The Americans, moreover, have no point of comparison. England once ruled the colonies as a whole, but the people have always directed town affairs. So sovereignty of the

w. "Rights and duties are multiplied in the town in order to attach man by its benefits, like religion by its observances. Town life makes itself felt at every moment. Duty, flexible and easy to fulfill; social importance that that *scatters*" (YTC, CVb, p. 17).

people in the town is not only a long-standing condition, but also an original one.

The inhabitant of New England is attached to his town, because it is strong and independent; he is interested in it, because he participates in its leadership; he loves it, because he has nothing to complain about in his lot. In the town he places his ambition and his future; he joins in each of the incidents of town life; in this limited sphere, accessible to him, he tries his hand at governing society. He becomes accustomed to the forms without which liberty proceeds only by revolutions, is infused with their spirit, acquires a taste for order, understands the harmony of powers, and finally gathers clear and practical ideas about the nature of his duties as well as the extent of his rights.

Of the County in New England

The county in New England, analogous to the arrondissement *in France.—Created for a purely administrative interest.—Has no representation.—Administered by non-elective officials.*

The American county is very analogous to the French *arrondissement.* As for the latter, an arbitrary circumscription was drawn for the former; it forms a body whose different parts have no necessary bonds with each other and for whom neither affection nor memory nor shared existence serve as attachments. It is created only for a purely administrative interest.

The town was too limited in area ever to contain the administration of justice. The county is, therefore, the primary judicial center. Each county has a court of justice,[10] a sheriff to execute the decisions of the courts, a prison that must hold the criminals.

There are needs that are felt in a more or less equal way by all the towns of a county; it was natural that a central authority was charged with providing for them. In Massachusetts, this authority resides in the hands of a

10. *See the law of 14 February 1821,* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. II, p. 551.*

certain number of magistrates, appointed by the Governor of the state, with the advice[11] of his council.[12]

The county administrators have only a limited and exceptional power that applies only to a very small number of cases provided for in advance. The state and the town are sufficient for the ordinary course of things. These administrators only prepare the county budget; the legislature votes it.[13] There is no assembly that, directly or indirectly, represents the county.

So truly speaking, the county has no political existence.[x]

A double tendency is noticeable in most American constitutions, which leads the law-makers to divide executive power and to concentrate legislative power. The New England town by itself has a principle of existence that is not stripped away from it. But this existence would have to be created artificially in the county, and the usefulness of doing so has not been felt. All the towns united together have only a single representative, the state,[y] center of all national powers;[z] apart from town and national action, you could say that there are only individual powers.

Of Administration in New England[a]

In America, you do not see the administration.—Why.—Europeans believe they are establishing liberty by taking away some of the rights belonging to the social power; Americans, by

11. *See the law of 20 February 1819,* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. II, p. 494.*
12. *The Governor's Council is an elected body.*
13. *See the law of 2 November 1781,* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 61.*
x. In a working note for the draft of *Ireland,* Beaumont will write:
"—In Ireland political life is in the *county,* because Ireland is aristocratic.
—In America, in the *town,* because America is democratic.
—Among us, in the *State,* because France, still *monarchical"* (Beaumont, YTC, CX).
y. In a first draft, this section was followed by that which treats the state.
z. The style of the last three sentences had been modified following remarks by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 70).
a. The manuscript mentions the following titles: "OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE UNITED STATES," "WHAT IS MEANT IN THE UNITED STATES BY ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT. THEIR MEANS OF ACTION AND THEIR ELEMENTS," and "OF EXECUTIVE POWER IN THE UNITED STATES. OF GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION."

dividing their exercise.—Nearly all of the administration strictly speaking contained in the town, and divided among town officers.—No trace of an administrative hierarchy is seen, either in the town or above it.—Why it is so.— How the state happens, however, to be administered in a uniform way.—Who is charged with making the town and county administrations obey the law.—Of the introduction of the judicial power into the administration.—Result of extending the elective principle to all officials.—Of the justice of the peace in New England.—Appointed by whom.—Administers the county.—Ensures the administration of the towns.—Court of sessions.—The way in which it acts.—Who apprises it.—The right of inspection and of complaint, scattered like all administrative functions.—Informers encouraged by sharing fines.

What most strikes the European who travels across the United States is the absence of what among us we call government or administration. In America, you see written laws; you see their daily execution; everything is in motion around you, and the motor is nowhere to be seen. The hand that runs the social machine escapes at every moment.

But just as all peoples, in order to express their thoughts, are obliged to resort to certain grammatical forms that constitute human languages, all societies, in order to continue to exist, are compelled to submit to a certain amount of authority; without it, they fall into anarchy. This authority can be distributed in different ways; but it must always be found somewhere.

There are two means to diminish the strength of authority[b] in a nation.

The first is to weaken power in its very principle, by taking from society the right or the capacity to defend itself in certain cases; to weaken au-

b. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not like the word *authority* here very much. It seems too generic to me to apply to the species; there is the authority of laws that cannot be diminished, nor that of the magistrates. I would prefer *power.* It would be dropped in the following sentence" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 86 prima).

thority in this way is what, in Europe, is generally called establishing liberty.[c]

[{This method has always seemed to me barbaric and antisocial.}]

There is a second means to diminish the action of authority. This one consists not of stripping society of some of its rights or paralyzing its efforts, but of dividing the use of its powers among several hands; of multiplying officials while attributing to each all the power needed to carry out what he is meant to do. There are peoples who can still be led to anarchy by this division of the social powers; in itself, however, it is not anarchic. By sharing authority in this way, its action is made less irresistible and less dangerous, it is true; but authority is not destroyed.

The Revolution in the United States was produced by a mature and thoughtful taste for liberty, and not by a vague and undefined instinct for independence. It was not based upon passions for disorder; on the contrary, it proceeded with love of order and of legality.[d]

So in the United States, the Americans did not claim that, in a free country, a man had the right to do everything; on the contrary, social obligations more varied than elsewhere were imposed on him. They did not have the idea of attacking the power of society in its principle and of contesting its rights; they limited themselves to dividing power in its exercise. In this way they wanted to make authority great and the official small, so that society might continue to be well regulated and remain free.

There is no country in the world where the law speaks a language as

c. Édouard de Tocqueville:

I cannot understand this. How can someone think to establish liberty by taking *from society* the right to defend itself? Fine, if you had said: *by taking from the government which represents society,* etc. You wanted to say, I think, that someone thought to establish liberty by weakening the government, the governmental power. Well! That is badly expressed, for to weaken the government of a society or to weaken this society are two very different things. French society was not weak under the Convention, but the old government had just been destroyed" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 81–82).

d. In the margin of another version: "≠When democracy comes with mores and beliefs, it leads to liberty.

When it comes with moral and religious anarchy, it leads to despotism.≠"

absolute as in America, nor is there one where the right to apply the law is divided among so many hands.

Administrative power in the United States presents nothing either centralized or hierarchical in its constitution; that is why you do not see it. Power exists, but you do not know where to find its representative.

We saw above that the New England towns were not subordinate. So they take care of their own individual interests.

It is also the town magistrates who are usually charged with seeing to the execution of the general laws of the state or with executing them themselves.[14]

Apart from the general laws, the state sometimes makes general regulations concerning public order. But ordinarily it is the towns and the town officers who, jointly with the justices of the peace and according to the needs of the localities, regulate the details of social existence and promulgate prescriptions relating to public health, good order and the morality of citizens.[15]

Finally it is the municipal magistrates who, by themselves and without needing to wait for outside initiative, provide for the unexpected needs that societies often feel.[e] [16]

14. *See* The Town Officer, *particularly the words* Selectmen, Assessors, Collectors, Schools, Surveyors of Highways . . . *Example among many others: the state forbids unnecessary travel on Sunday. It is the* tythingmen, *town officers, who are especially charged with using their authority to enforce the law.*

See the law of 8 March 1792, Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 410.*

The selectmen draw up the electoral lists for the election of the Governor and forward the result of the vote to the secretary of the republic. Law of 24 February 1796, id., *vol. I, p. 488.*

15. *Example: the selectmen authorize the construction of sewers, designate the locations where slaughterhouses can be built, and where certain types of business whose proximity is harmful can be established.*

See the law of 7 June 1785, vol. I, p. 193.

e. In the first draft: "≠The administration in societies where the legislative and executive powers are not concentrated in the same hands {where the principle of sovereignty of the people reigns} has only two obligations:

1. To *execute* the existing laws.

2. To provide for the unforeseen accidents of social life.≠"

16. *Example: the selectmen attend to public health in case of contagious diseases, and*

As a result of what we have just said, administrative power in Massachusetts is almost entirely contained within the town;[17] but it is divided there among many hands.

In the French town there is in fact only a single administrative official, the mayor.[f]

We have seen that there were at least nineteen in the New England town.

The nineteen officers do not generally depend on each other. The law has carefully drawn a circle of action around each of these magistrates. Within this circle, they have all the power needed to fulfill the duties of their office and are not under any town authority.

If you look above the town, you see scarcely a trace of an administrative hierarchy. Sometimes county officials correct a decision made by the towns or by the town magistrates,[18] but in general you can say that the administrators of the county do not have the right to direct the conduct of the administrators of the town.[19] The former have authority over the latter only in things that concern the county.

jointly with the justices of the peace, take necessary measures. Law of 22 June 1797, vol. I, p. 539 [549 (ed.)].

17. *I say* almost, *because there are several incidents of town life that are regulated, either by a justice of the peace in their individual capacity, or by the justices of the peace assembled as a body at the county-seat. Example: it is the justices of the peace who grant licenses. See the law of 28 February 1787, vol. I, p. 297.*

f. Initially, Tocqueville wrote more specifically: "≠In the French town the mayor is only the representative of an official at a higher level than he; his power is only the reflection of a superior power, a delegation of authority; the representative must always disappear before the one who gave the mandate.≠"

18. *Example: a license is granted only to those who present a certificate of good conduct given by the selectmen. If the selectmen refuse to give this certificate, the person can complain to the justices of the peace assembled in the court of sessions, and they can grant the license. See the law of 12 March 1808, vol. II, p. 186. The towns have the right to make regulations* (bylaws) *and to require the observation of these bylaws by fines the level of which are fixed; but these bylaws must be approved by the court of sessions. See the law of 23 March 1786, vol. I, p. 254.*

19. *In Massachusetts, the county administrators are often called to assess the acts of the town administrators; but we will see later that they engage in this examination as a judicial power, and not as an administrative authority.*

The town magistrates and those of the county are required, in a very small number of cases stipulated in advance, to report the result of their actions to the officers of the central government.[20] But the central government is not represented by one man charged with making general regulations concerning public order or ordinances for the execution of the laws, with communicating routinely with the administrators of the county and town, with examining their conduct, with directing their actions and punishing their mistakes.

So there is no center where the lines of administrative power come together.

Then how do you manage to run society according to a more or less uniform plan? How can counties and their administrators, towns and their officers be made to obey?[g]

In the states of New England, the legislative power extends to more objects than with us. The legislator penetrates in a way to the very heart of the administration; the law gets into the smallest details. It simultaneously prescribes the principles and the means to apply them; thus it encloses the secondary bodies and their administrators within a multitude of strict and rigorously defined obligations.

As a result, if all the secondary bodies and all the officials follow the law, all parts of society proceed in a uniform way. But there still remains the

20. *Example: the town school committees are bound to make an annual report on the state of the school to the secretary of the republic. See the law of 10 March 1827, vol. III, p. 183.*

g. Administrative and judicial powers./

Among all nations there are two methods of executing the laws:

The *administrative* method.

The *judicial* method.

The administrative method always addresses the cause; the other, the effect. The one is direct; the other, indirect.

Example: a town makes an illegal decree.

The executive power quashes it. The judicial power prevents it from having any effects and protects those who resist it.

An obstruction arises on the public road. The executive power has it removed; the judicial power gets to the same end indirectly by fining those who caused it (YTC, CVb, pp. 19–20).

question of knowing how the secondary bodies and their officials can be forced to follow the law.

In a general way you can say that society finds at its disposal only two means to force officials to obey the laws.

It can entrust to one of the officers the discretionary power to direct all the others and to remove them from office in case of disobedience.

Or it can charge the courts with imposing judicial penalties on those who break the law.[h]

You are not always free to choose one or the other of these means.

The right of directing an official assumes the right to remove him from office, if he does not follow the orders given to him, or to promote him if he zealously fulfills all of his duties. Now, an elected magistrate can be neither removed nor promoted. Elective offices are by nature irrevocable until the end of the term. In reality, the elected magistrate has nothing either to hope or to fear except from the voters.[j] So when all public offices result from election, there can be no true hierarchy among officials, since both the right to command and the right to quell disobedience effectively cannot be given to the same man; and the power to command cannot be joined with that of rewarding and punishing.

h. Centralization. Town liberties.

In France there are two means available against the decisions of the Administration, an *administrative* means and a *judicial* means.

When an agent of the administration orders something contrary to the law, you can apply to his superior and have his decision changed.

In the same situation, you can refuse to obey, and then the question comes before the courts that decide indirectly if the official had the right to issue the order. See a discussion where these ideas are treated by Odilon Barrot. Débats [*Journal des débats* (ed.)] of 1 March 1834 (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 26–27).

Tocqueville's papers contain an article clipped from the *Journal des débats* of the same date, relating to the discussion on 28 February 1834 on the municipal law (copied in YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 27–46). On the occasion of the debate, Barrot defends the independence of the French towns against Thiers and the government, which took a position in favor of a strict control of the mayor by the prefect.

j. "Where there is election, the supervision by the superior official of his inferior is less necessary. Elections deal with negligence; the courts, with misdeed.

Be careful to distinguish carefully what is judicial from what is administrative. *Nearly all the administration strictly speaking is concentrated in the towns; it is only a matter of having them fulfill their obligations"* (YTC, CVb, p. 6).

People who introduce election into the secondary mechanisms of their government are therefore led necessarily to make heavy use of judicial penalties as a means of administration.

This is not obvious at first glance. Those who govern see making offices elective as a first concession, and submitting elected magistrates to the decisions of judges as a second concession. They dread these two innovations equally; and because they are requested to do the first more than the second, they grant the election of the official and leave him independent of the judge. One of these two measures, however, is the only counterbalance that can be given to the other. We should be very careful about this; an elective power not submitted to a judicial power escapes sooner or later from all control or is destroyed. Between the central power and elected administrative bodies, only the courts can serve as an intermediary. They alone can force the elected official to obey without violating the right of the voter.

So in the political world, the extension of judicial power must be correlative with the extension of elective power. If these two things do not go together, the State ends by falling into anarchy or servitude.[k]

It has been noted in all times that judicial habits prepared men rather poorly for the exercise of administrative power.

The Americans took from their fathers, the English, the idea of an institution that has no analogy whatsoever with what we know on the continent of Europe: the justices of the peace.

The justice of the peace holds a middle place between a public figure and the magistrate, administrator and judge. The justice of the peace is an enlightened citizen, but not necessarily one who is versed in knowledge of the laws. Consequently, he is charged only with keeping order in society, something that requires good sense and uprightness more than knowledge. The justice of the peace brings to administration, when he takes part in it, a certain taste for forms and for publicity that makes him a highly trou-

k. Hervé de Tocqueville: "This sentence is abstract."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "It is very concise. I do not find it obscure" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 87).

Gustave de Beaumont: "Excellent sentence. Do not listen to paternal advice" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 72).

blesome instrument to despotism. But he does not appear to be a slave to those legal superstitions that make magistrates[m] little capable of governing.

The Americans appropriated the institution of justices of the peace, all the while removing the aristocratic character that distinguished it in the mother country.

The Governor[n] of Massachusetts[21] appoints, in all the counties, a certain number of justices of the peace, whose term in office lasts seven years.[22]

Among these justices of the peace, moreover, he designates three of them who form in each county what is called the *court of sessions.*

The justices of the peace individually take part in public administration. Sometimes, along with the elected officials, they are charged with certain administrative acts;[23] sometimes they form a court before which the mag-

m. Édouard de Tocqueville: "I would like there: that *generally* make magistrates little capable, etc. . . . No one must be hurt, and by allowing for exceptions, everyone applies the exception to himself; besides, I believe that there really are some" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 82).

n. Édouard de Tocqueville (?):

> We have not yet heard about a governor. The reader is even totally unaware what this pompous label corresponds to in a republican country. Astonishment is redoubled when he learns that in the same country where the principle of informing [delegation? (ed.)] has penetrated everywhere, the governor appoints, in all the counties, a certain number of justices of the peace, etc.
>
> I know that further along, on page 229, you explain what the functions of the governor are, but it appears indispensable to me that you say a word about it here, since the reader is bewildered when reading this paragraph. You could, I believe, begin this paragraph more or less like this: *There is in each county a magistrate who has the title of governor. I will say further on how he gets his powers and what his attributions are.* Or better still, this could be put in a note at the bottom of the page, or simply in a note at the word governor: *head of the executive power of the county* (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 82–83).

Note 21 does not exist in the manuscript.

21. *We will see further on what the Governor is; I must say at this moment that the Governor represents the executive power of the whole state.*

22. *See the Constitution of Massachusetts, chap. II, section I, paragraph 9; chap. III, paragraph 3.*

23. *Example among many others: a stranger arrives in a town, coming from a country ravaged by a contagious disease. He falls ill. Two justices of the peace, with the advice of the selectmen, can order the county sheriff to transport him elsewhere and to watch over him. Law of 22 June 1797, vol. I, p. 540.*

In general, the justices of the peace intervene in all the important acts of administrative life and give them a semi-judicial character.

istrates summarily charge the citizen who refuses to obey, or the citizen denounces the crimes of the magistrates. But it is in the court of sessions that the justices of the peace exercise the most important of their administrative functions.

The court of sessions meets twice a year at the county seat. In Massachusetts it is charged with upholding the obedience of most[24] of the public officials.[25]

Careful attention must be paid to the fact that in Massachusetts the court of sessions is simultaneously an administrative body strictly speaking and a political court.

[≠The administrative and judicial functions of the court of sessions are so often confused in practice, that it is difficult to separate them even in theory. But it is useful to do so.

<The court of sessions has attributions of two kinds. It administers the county and ensures the administration of the towns.>≠]

24. *I say* most *because in fact certain administrative crimes are referred to the ordinary courts. Example: when a town refuses to raise the funds needed for its schools, or to appoint the school committee, a very considerable fine is imposed. The court called* supreme judicial court *or the court of* common pleas *pronounces this fine. See the law of 10 March 1827, vol. III, p. 190. Id. When a town fails to make provision for war supplies. Law of 21 February 1822, vol. II, p. 570.*

25. *The justices of the peace, in their individual capacity,*[o] *take part in the government of the towns and counties. The most important acts of town life are generally undertaken only with the support of one of them.*

o. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> I do not believe that the word *capacity* exactly expresses the thought of the author. Care must be taken about using words whose specific expression is made uncertain by their multiple meanings. It seems to me that, from page 189 to 193, Alexis does not say enough about how the justices of the peace participate in town administration. He must not lose sight of the fact that America is something new for most of his readers, and that they will be looking in his book still more for instructions than for reflections. I admit that here, being uninformed, my curiosity is not satisfied. I feel humiliated by my lack of knowledge, and I am annoyed that the author has assumed that I am more informed than I am. These pages must be reviewed and more precise details given about the administrative action of the justices of the peace, when they act outside of the court of sessions. Most readers do not even know how they act in England.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Quite right. It seems to me that here the word *capacity* means *attribution.* This word would be better I believe" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 87–88).

We said that the county[26] had only an administrative existence. It is the court of sessions by itself that is in charge of the small number of interests that relate to several towns at the same time or to all the towns of the county at once, interests that consequently cannot be entrusted to any single town in particular.

When it concerns the county, the duties of the court of sessions are therefore purely administrative, and if it often introduces judicial forms into its way of proceeding, it is only as a means to inform itself,[27] and as a guarantee given to the citizens. But when the administration of the towns must be ensured, the court of sessions almost always acts as a judicial body, and only in a few rare cases, as an administrative body.

The first difficulty that presents itself is making the town itself, a nearly independent power, obey the general laws of the state.

We have seen that each year the towns must appoint a certain number of magistrates who, as assessors, apportion taxes. A town tries to evade the obligation to pay the tax by not appointing the assessors. The court of sessions imposes a heavy fine.[28] The fine is raised by head on all the inhabitants. The county sheriff, officer of the law, executes the decision. In this way, in the United States, power seems eager to hide itself carefully from sight. Administrative command is almost always veiled there as a judicial mandate; as such it is only more powerful, having in its favor the almost irresistible strength that men grant to legal forms.

This procedure is easy to follow and is easily understood. What is required of the town is, in general, clear and defined; it consists of a simple and uncomplicated act, of a principle, and not a detailed application.[29] But

26. *The things relating to the county and that the court of sessions attends to can be reduced to these:*

1. The building of prisons and courts of justice; 2. The proposed county budget (it is the state legislature that votes on it); 3. The apportionment of these taxes thus voted; 4. The distribution of certain licenses; 5. The establishment and repair of county roads.

27. *When it is a matter of a road, this is the way that the court of sessions, with the help of the jury, settles nearly all the difficulties of execution.*

28. *See the law of 20 February 1786, vol. I, p. 217.*

29. *There is an indirect way to make the town obey. The towns are compelled by law to keep their roads in good condition. If they neglect to vote the funds required for this main-*

the difficulty begins when it concerns securing the obedience, not of the town any longer, but of the town officers.

All the reprehensible actions that a public official can commit fall definitively into one of these categories:

He can do, without enthusiasm and without zeal, what the law requires of him.

He cannot do what the law requires of him.

Finally, he can do what the law forbids.

A court can get at the conduct of an official only in the last two cases. A positive and appreciable act is needed as grounds for judicial action.

Thus, if the selectmen fail to fulfill the formalities required by law in the case of town elections, they can be fined.[30]

But when the public official fulfills his duty without intelligence, when he obeys the instructions of the law without enthusiasm and without zeal, he is entirely beyond the reach of a judicial body.

In this case, the court of sessions, even when vested with its administrative attributions, is impotent to force him to fulfill all of his obligations. Only fear of removal can prevent these quasi-failings; and the court of sessions does not hold within itself the source of town powers; it cannot remove officials that it does not appoint.[p]

In order to make certain, moreover, that there is negligence or lack of zeal, the subordinate official would have to be put under constant supervision. Now, the court of sessions meets only twice a year; it does not conduct inspections; it judges only the reprehensible acts that are brought before it.

tenance, the town magistrate responsible for the roads is then authorized, as a matter of course, to raise the needed money. Since he is himself responsible to individuals for the bad condition of the roads, and can be sued by them before the court of sessions, it is assured that he will exercise against the town the extraordinary right given to him by the law. Thus, by threatening the officer, the court of sessions forces the town to obey. See the law of 5 March 1787, vol. I, p. 305.

30. Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. II, p. 45.*

p. Hervé de Tocqueville: *"Que, qui, que* within a few lines. I do not know why, when the thought is powerful, the style drags. It comes from repeated use of *c'est que, il n'y a que;* you must fight to the death against them. In a work of this type a concise and dogmatic sentence is better than a drawn-out sentence. Example: Montesquieu" (YTC, CIIIb, p. 109).

Only the discretionary power to remove public officials can guarantee the kind of enlightened and active obedience on their part that judicial suppression cannot impose.

In France we seek this last guarantee in *administrative hierarchy;* in America, they seek it in *election.*

Thus to summarize in a few words what I have just explained:

Should the public official in New England commit a *crime* in the exercise of his duties, the ordinary courts are *always* called to bring him to justice.

Should he commit an *administrative fault,* a purely administrative court is charged with punishing him, and when the matter is serious or urgent the judge does what the official should have done.[31]

Finally, should the same official be guilty of one of those intangible failings that human justice can neither define nor assess, he appears annually before a tribunal from which there is no appeal, that can suddenly reduce him to impotence [{remove him from power without even telling him why}]. His power is lost with his mandate.

Certainly this system encompasses great advantages,[q] but in its execution a practical difficulty is encountered that must be noted.

I have already remarked that the administrative tribunal that is called the court of sessions did not have the right to inspect the town magistrates; following a legal term, it can only act when it is *apprised.* But that is the delicate point of the system.

The Americans of New England have not established a public prosecutor attached to the court of sessions,[32] and you must understand how

31. *Example: if a town stubbornly persists in not naming assessors, the court of sessions names them, and the magistrates chosen in this way are vested with the same powers as the elected magistrates. See the law already cited of 20 February 1787.*

q. In the margin: "≠Perhaps enumerate them at this time.
Human dignity.
Legal, not *arbitrary* habits.
People at their business.≠"

32. *I say* attached to the court of sessions. *There is a magistrate, attached to the ordinary courts, who fulfills several of the functions of the public prosecutor's office.*

difficult it would have been for them to establish one. If they had limited themselves to placing a prosecutor at each county seat, and if they had not given him agents in the towns, why would this magistrate have been more informed about what was happening in the county than the members of the court of sessions themselves? If he had been given agents in each town, the power most to be feared,[*] that of administering through the courts, would have been centralized in his hands. Laws are, moreover, the daughters of habits, and nothing similar existed in English legislation.

So the Americans have divided, like all other administrative functions, the right of inspection and the right of complaint.

Under the terms of the law, the members of the grand jury must notify the court, to which they are attached, of crimes of all kinds that might be committed in their county.[33] There are certain great administrative crimes that the ordinary public prosecutor must pursue as a matter of course.[34] Most often, the obligation to have the offenders punished is imposed on the fiscal officer, charged with collecting the proceeds of the fine; thus the town treasurer is charged with pursuing most of the administrative crimes that are committed in his sight.

But above all, American legislation appeals to individual interest;[35] that is the great principle found constantly when you study the laws of the United States.

[*]. <≠Far from wanting to create a magistrate of this kind, the Americans have, on the contrary, such a great fear of combining too much administrative power in the same hands, that when they assign responsibility to someone for suing for administrative crimes, they hardly ever choose the most important officials.

Should a town refuse to raise the state tax, it is not the Governor who notifies the court of sessions, it is the state Treasurer. *L[aws (ed.)] of M[assachusetts (ed.)],* vol. I, p. 209.

Should an assessor refuse to accept the functions that are granted to him, it is not the selectmen who sue, it is the town treasurer. *Id.,* vol. I, p. 218.≠>

33. *Grand juries are obliged, for example, to inform the courts about the bad condition of the roads.* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 308 [307–308 (ed.)].*

34. *If, for example, the county treasurer does not provide his books.* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 406.*

35. *Example among many: an individual damages his vehicle or is hurt on a poorly maintained road; he has the right to ask the town or the county responsible for the road for damages before the court of sessions.* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 309 [307–308 (ed.)].*

American legislators show little confidence in human honesty; but they always assume an intelligent man. So most often they rely on personal interest for the execution of laws.

Indeed, when an individual is positively and presently hurt by an administrative crime, it is understood that personal interest guarantees the lodging of a complaint.

But it is easy to foresee that, if it concerns a legal prescription that has no utility felt by an individual at the moment, even though the legal prescription is useful to society, each person will hesitate to come forward as accuser. In this way, by a kind of tacit agreement, the laws could fall into disuse.

Thrown into this extremity by their system, the Americans are forced to interest informers by calling them in certain cases to share in the fines.[36]

Dangerous measure that assures the execution of laws by debasing mores.

Above the county magistrates, there is truly no other administrative power, only a governmental power.

General Ideas on Administration in the United States

How the states of the Union differ among themselves, by the system of administration.—Town life less active and less complete

36. *In case of invasion or insurrection, when the town officers neglect to provide the militia with necessary equipment and supplies, the town may be fined 200 to 500 dollars (1000 to 2700 [2500 (ed.)] francs). It can easily be imagined that, in such a case, it could happen that no one would have either the interest or the desire to take the role of accuser. Consequently, the law adds:* "[the fine is] to be sued for and recovered by any person, who may prosecute for the same, [. . .(ed.). . .] one moiety to the prosecutor." *See the law of 6 March 1810, vol. II, p. 236.*

The same arrangement is found very frequently reproduced in the laws of Massachusetts.

Sometimes it is not the individual that the law incites in this way to sue public officials; it is the official who is encouraged to have the disobedience of particular individuals punished. Example: an inhabitant refuses to do the share of work assigned to him on a major roadway. The surveyor of roads must sue him; and if the surveyor has him found guilty, half of the fine comes to him. See the laws already cited, vol. I, p. 308.

as you move toward the south.—The power of the magistrate then becomes greater; that of the voter smaller.—Administration passes from the town to the county.—State of New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania.—Administrative principles applicable to all the Union.—Election of public officials or fixed term of their offices.—Absence of hierarchy.—Introduction of judicial means into the administration.

I previously announced that, after having examined in detail the constitution of the town and county in New England, I would cast a general glance over the rest of the Union.

There are towns and town life in each state; but in none of the confederated states do you find a town identical to the New England town.

As you move toward the south, you notice that town life becomes less active; the town has fewer magistrates, rights and duties; the population there does not exercise so direct an influence on town affairs; town meetings are less frequent and involve fewer matters. The power of the elected magistrate is therefore comparatively greater and that of the voter, smaller; town spirit there is less awake and less powerful.[37]

You begin to see these differences in the state of New York; they are already very apparent in Pennsylvania; but they become less striking when you move toward the Northwest. Most of the emigrants who go to establish the states of the Northwest come from New England, and they bring the

37. *See, for detail,* The Revised Statutes of the State of New York, *at part I, chap. XI, entitled:* Of the Powers, Duties and Privileges of Towns, *vol. I, pp. 336–64.*

See in the collection entitled: Digest of the Laws of Pennsylvania, *the words* Assessors, Collectors, Constables, Overseers of the Poor, Supervisors of highways. *And in the collection entitled:* Acts of a General Nature of the State of Ohio, *the law of 25 February 1824, relating to the towns, p. 412. And next, the particular arrangements relative to the diverse town officers, such as:* Township's Clerks, Trustees, Overseers of the Poor, Fence Viewers, Appraisers of Property, Township's Treasurers, Constables, Supervisors of Highways.

administrative habits of their mother land to their adopted country. The Ohio town has much in common with the Massachusetts town.

We have seen that in Massachusetts the principle of public administration is found in the town. The town is the center where the interests and affections of men converge. But it ceases to be so the more you move toward the states where enlightenment is less universally spread and where, consequently, the town offers fewer guarantees of wisdom and fewer elements of administration. So as you move away from New England, town life passes in a way to the county. The county becomes the great administrative center and forms the intermediate power between the [central] government and the ordinary citizens.

I said that in Massachusetts county matters were directed by the court of sessions. The court of sessions is made up of a certain number of magistrates appointed by the Governor and his council. The county has no representation, and its budget is voted by the national [*sic:* state] legislature.

In the large state of New York, on the contrary, in the state of Ohio and in Pennsylvania, the inhabitants of each county elect a certain number of deputies; these deputies meet together to form a representative county assembly.[38]

The county assembly possesses, within certain limits, the right to tax the inhabitants; in this regard, it constitutes a true legislature. It simultaneously administers the county, directs the administration of the towns in several instances, and limits their powers much more strictly than in Massachusetts.[r]

These are the principal differences presented by the constitution of the town and county in the various confederated states. If I wanted to get into

38. *See* Revised Statutes of the State of New York, *part I, chap. XI, vol. I, p. 340.* Id. *chap. XII;* id., *p. 366.* Id., Acts of the State of Ohio, *law of 25 February 1824, relating to the county commissioners, p. 263. See* Digest of the Laws of Pennsylvania, *the words* County Rates, and Levies, *p. 170.*

In the state of New York, each town elects a deputy, and this deputy participates at the same time in the county administration and in that of the town.

r. In the margin: "≠Ask L[ouis (ed.)] and B[eaumont (ed.)] if it is necessary to support these generalities with notes. Here either very minutely detailed notes are needed or nothing.≠"

the details of the means of execution, there are still many other dissimilarities that I could point out. But my goal is not to give a course in American administrative law.

I have said enough about it, I think, to make the general principles that administration in the United States rests upon understood. These principles are applied in different ways; they have more or less numerous consequences depending on the place; but fundamentally they are the same everywhere. The laws vary; their physiognomy changes; the same spirit animates them.

The town and county are not constituted in the same way everywhere; but you can say that everywhere in the United States the organization of the town and county rests on the same idea: that each person is the best judge of what concerns himself alone, and the one most able to provide for his individual needs. So the town and county are charged with looking after their special interests. The state governs and does not administer. Exceptions to this principle are found, but not a contrary principle.[s]

The first consequence of this doctrine has been to have all the administrators[t] of the town and county chosen by the inhabitants themselves, or at least to choose these magistrates exclusively from among the inhabitants.[*]

[≠The second, to put into their hands the administration [v. direction] of nearly all the interests of the town and county.

The state has retained the power to impose laws on all the towns and counties, but it has not put into the hands of any official the power to direct the administration in a general way.≠]

s. "To place.

Jealousy of legislatures against intermediate bodies.

In New England the justice of the peace prepares the county budget; it is the legislature that votes on it. In the state of New York it is a representation of the county that votes on the tax, but its power is confined to very narrow limits" (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 13).

t. Hervé de Tocqueville: "It seems to me that you cannot say as positively that these administrators are chosen by the inhabitants since you have taught us that the justices of the peace are chosen by the Governor" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 111). Cf. note 48.

[*]. I say this because in the laws of Tennessee, which are probably those found among all those of Virginian descent, the justices of the peace or magistrates composing the county court (who hold their offices during good behavior) are in charge of the entire administration. I believe that it is purely and simply the English system.

Since administrators everywhere are elected or at least irrevocable, the result has been that rules of hierarchy have not been able to be introduced anywhere. So there are nearly as many independent officials as offices. Administrative power finds itself scattered among a multitude of hands.

Since administrative hierarchy exists nowhere and administrators are elected and irrevocable until the end of their term, the obligation followed to introduce courts, more or less, into the administration. From that comes the system of fines, by means of which the secondary bodies and their representatives are forced to obey the law. This system is found from one end of the Union to the other.

The power of suppressing administrative crimes or of taking administrative actions as needed has not been granted, moreover, to the same judges in all the states.

The Anglo-Americans have drawn the institution of the justices of the peace from a common source; it is found in all the states. But they have not always taken advantage of it in the same way.

Everywhere the justices of the peace take part in the administration of the towns and counties,[39] either by administering them directly or by suppressing certain administrative crimes committed in them. But in most states, the most serious of these crimes are submitted to ordinary courts.

Election of administrative officials, or irremovability from office, lack of administrative hierarchy, and introduction of judicial measures into the government of society at the secondary level are, therefore, the principal

39. *There are even states in the South where the magistrates*[u] *of the county courts are charged with all details of the administration. See* The Statutes of the State of Tennessee, *the art.* Judiciary, Taxes . . .

u. Hervé de Tocqueville: "If there are states where the court of sessions is charged with all details of the administration, what becomes in these states of the town spirit *so praised by the author*?

"It would seem, from the end of the chapter, that certain states are beginning to feel the disadvantage of excessive decentralization. This consideration must be weighed by the author in the following chapter" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 77).

characteristics by which American administration, from Maine to Florida, is recognized.[v]

There are some states where signs of administrative centralization begin to be seen. The state of New York is the most advanced along this path.

In the state of New York, officials of the central government exercise, in certain cases, a kind of supervision and control over the conduct of the secondary bodies.[40] In certain other cases, they form a type of court of appeal for deciding matters.[41] In the state of New York, judicial penalties

v. "No hierarchy and no centralization, character of American administration. So in the town, more powers and more magistrates than in the French town, but all independent.

"Division of powers among those charged with making them fulfill their duties. Finally, when they are concentrated, it is in a *judicial body,* that is to say, legal and far from arbitrary [v: slave to forms]" (YTC, CVb, p. 16).

40. *Example: the running of public education is centralized in the hands of the government. The legislature appoints the members of the university, called regents; the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor of the state are members* ex officio. *(*Revised Statutes, *vol. I, p. 456). The regents of the university visit the colleges and universities each year and submit an annual report to the legislature; their supervision is not illusory, for the following particular reasons: the colleges, in order to become corporations that can buy, sell and own, need a charter; but this charter is granted by the legislature only on the advice of the regents. Each year the state distributes to the colleges and academies the interest from a special fund created to encourage education. It is the regents who are the distributors of this money. See chap. XV, Public Education,* Revised Statutes, *vol. I, p. 455.*

Each year, the boards of public schools are required to send a report on conditions to the superintendent of the Republic, Id., *p. 488.*

A similar report on the number and condition of the poor must be made annually to him. Id., *p. 631.*

41. *When someone believes himself wronged by certain acts coming from the school commissioners (these are town officers), he can appeal to the superintendent of primary schools whose decision is final.* Revised Statutes, *vol. I, p. 487.*

You find here and there, in the laws of the state of New York, provisions analogous to those I have just cited as examples. But in general these tentative efforts at centralization are weak and not very productive. While the highest officials of the state were given the right to supervise and direct inferior agents, they were not given the right to reward or punish them. The same man is hardly ever charged with giving the order and with suppressing disobedience; so he has the right to command, but not the ability to make himself obeyed.

In 1830, the superintendent of schools, in his annual report to the legislature, complained that several school commissioners, despite notice from him, had not forwarded the accounts

are used less than elsewhere as an administrative measure. There, the right to bring proceedings against administrative crimes is also placed in fewer hands.[42]

The same tendency is slightly felt in several other states.[43] But, in general, you can say that the salient characteristic of public administration in the United States is to be prodigiously decentralized.

Of the State

I have talked about the towns and about administration; I still have to talk about the state and about government.

Here, I can move faster without fear of being misunderstood; what I have to say is found all sketched out in written constitutions that anyone can easily obtain.[44] These constitutions rest on a simple and rational theory.

Most of the forms that they prescribe have been adopted by all peoples who have constitutions; they have therefore become familiar to us.

So I have only to do a brief overview here. Later I will try to judge what I am about to describe.

they owed him. "If this omission occurs again, he added, I will be reduced to prosecuting them to the full extent of the law before the courts of competent jurisdiction."

42. *Example: the district attorney in each county is charged with suing for the recovery of all fines above 50 dollars, as long as this right has not been expressly granted by law to another magistrate.* Revised Statutes, *part I, chap. XII, vol. I, p. 383.*

43. *There are several signs of administrative centralization in Massachusetts. Example: the town school boards are charged with making an annual report to the Secretary of State.* Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 367.*

44. *See the text of the constitution of New York.*[w]

w. Reproduced as an appendix in the first editions.

Legislative Power of the State

Division of the legislative body into two houses.—
Senate.—House of representatives.—
Different attributions of these two bodies.

The legislative power of the state is entrusted to two assemblies; the first is generally called the senate.

The senate is normally a legislative body; but sometimes it becomes an administrative and judicial body.

It takes part in administration in several ways depending on the different constitutions;[45] but ordinarily it enters into the sphere of executive power by taking part in the choice of officials.

It participates in judicial power by judging certain political crimes and sometimes as well by ruling on certain civil actions.[46]

Its members are always few in number.

The other branch of the legislature, usually called the house of representatives, participates in nothing related to administrative power, and takes part in judicial power only when accusing public officials before the senate.

The members of the two houses are subject almost everywhere to the same conditions of eligibility. Both are elected in the same way and by the same citizens.

The only difference that exists between them is due to the fact that the mandate of senators is generally longer than that of representatives. The second rarely remain in office more than a year; the first ordinarily hold their seats two or three years.

By granting senators the privilege of being named for several years, and by replacing them by cohort, the law has taken care to maintain, among the legislators, a nucleus of men, already used to public affairs, who can exercise a useful influence over the newcomers.

45. *In Massachusetts, the Senate is vested with no administrative function.*

46. *As in the state of New York.*[x]

x. See conversation with Mr. Spencer (non-alphabetic notebook 1, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 68).

So by the division of the legislative body into two branches, the Americans did not want to create one hereditary assembly and another elective one; they did not intend to make one into an aristocratic body, and the other into a representative of the democracy. Nor was their goal to make the first into a support for the governing power, while leaving the interests and passions of the people to the second.[y]

To divide legislative power, to slow in this way the movement of political assemblies, and to create a court of appeal for the revision of laws, such are the only advantages that result from the current constitution of the two houses in the United States.

Time and experience have shown the Americans that, reduced to these advantages, the division of legislative powers is still a necessity of the first order.

Pennsylvania alone, among all the united republics, tried at first to establish a single assembly. Franklin himself, carried away by the logical consequences of the dogma of sovereignty of the people, had worked toward this measure. The law soon had to be changed and two houses established. The principle of the division of legislative power thus received its final consecration; henceforth then, the necessity to divide legislative activity among several bodies can be considered a demonstrated truth. This theory, more or less unknown in the ancient republics, introduced into the world almost by chance, like most great truths, misunderstood among several modern peoples, has finally passed as an axiom into the political science of today.[z]

y. Division of administrative power, concentration of legislative power. *American principle* (important).

The legislature most often appoints *special agents* to enforce its will. Thus, power not even *regular or necessary executor* of the laws.

The Governor's veto is not a barrier to the democracy, the Governor emanating entirely from it. Only the judges are a real barrier.

Not only is power divided among several hands, but the exercise of power is divided. The Governor cannot appoint the official and direct him at the same time. *Subtle and dubious.*

The institution of the senate is a barrier to the democracy because named for a longer time; they [*sic*] are not as immediately subject to the fear of not being reelected (YTC, CVb, pp. 15–16).

z. Tocqueville, it must be remembered, was part of the commission charged with

drafting the constitution of 1848. There, he defended the division of legislative power into two branches. This idea came to nothing. In his *Souvenirs* (*OC,* XII, pp. 148–87), he gives some details about it. The notes taken by Beaumont during the work of the commission offer in this regard some interesting, previously unpublished details (YTC, DIVk). Beaumont notes as follows, in a rapid and necessarily schematic fashion, Tocqueville's answers to the proposal of Marrast concerning the creation of a single chamber (25 May 1848):

> Tocqueville.—Recognizes that the cause of two chambers is lost. The state of minds is such that it would be almost dangerous to insist upon a system that [illegible word] in itself is bad only in the circumstances.
>
> —But, necessary to show how two chambers are the only institution that can perhaps make the republic viable.
>
> —History!
>
> —The United States. The Constitution of the United States must be set aside; take the thirty democratic constitutions of the United States that have same social and political state as we.
>
> —Now, in these 30 states the question of two chambers is an accomplished fact and an uncontested truth.
>
> —Is it [that this (ed.)] historical tradition is English?
>
> —No. Instead of following the English tradition, they broke with it. Congress began with a single assembly. Those of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania in the same way (for thirteen years in Pennsylvania); and at the end of thirteen years with a single assembly, Pennsylvania changed the system of a single assembly and adopted two chambers.
>
> —So in France what made opinion so hostile to single chambers?
>
> —It is a misunderstanding. Until now in Europe the system of two chambers was to give a special expression to two different elements, the aristocrat and the democrat; from that it was concluded that the establishment of two chambers was an aristocratic principle. This natural conclusion is correct, if it was a question of introducing the slightest element of aristocracy into the government.
>
> —But is the existence of two chambers in itself a fact aristocratic by nature?
>
> —How so! The two chambers in America are from the aristocracy!! What is it then? The two chambers are chosen by the same electors, for the same time, in the same conditions, more or less.
>
> —Objection that if the second chamber has no use as a counterbalance to the democracy, what purpose does it serve? Then it is a superfluity.
>
> —No.
>
> —Even logically, it can be sustained. What is logical is that the nation be all powerful; but what [more (ed.)] contrary to logic than that the sovereignty of the nation have one or two agents.
>
> —Now logically what purpose do two chambers serve?

Of the Executive Power of the State

What the Governor is in an American state.—What position he occupies vis-à-vis the legislature.—What his rights and duties are.—His dependency on the people.

The executive power of the state is represented by the Governor.[*] [≠Not only is the Governor of each state an elected magistrate, but also he is generally elected only for a year; in this way he is tied by the shortest possible chain to the body from which he emanates.≠]

Three principal uses.

1. Necessity in France of giving the executive power great force. But, certain considerable matters cannot be absolutely conducted by the executive power without any everyday control. In the United States, the Senate assists the President in certain acts, or rather controls him; treaties, choice of high officials. Body small enough to be able to act in concert with the executive power and strong because it comes from the people. This could be done, it is true, by [the (ed.)] *Conseil d'État.*

2. Driving impulses of democracies. Perilous and untenable situation of the executive power, in the eternal head to head of this one man and this single assembly; eternal conflict between two wills face to face. – The only means for no conflict is that the man always gives way to the assembly. Then no struggle.

3. The great disease of democracies is legislative intemperance, violence in proceedings, rapidity in actions. The advantage of two chambers is not to prevent violent revolutions, but to prevent the bad government that ends up leading to revolution.

—What means to combat the inherent vices of this single body? It is to divide it.

—Two chambers drawn from the same elements can have different thoughts however.

—Difficulty for two or three men to dominate a country when there are two chambers. Very easy when there is only one chamber.

—Utility of two considerations of a question. But there are two considerations only when there are two assemblies. Two readings do not mean two considerations. It is resubmitting a judgment to those who have made it, and who will only repeat what they judged (YTC, DIVk).

The papers of Beaumont, which contain innumerable notes on the American constitutions, are there to witness to the importance given to American constitutional history during the discussions of the constitutional commission of 1848.

[*]. See the Constitution of Massachusetts, chap. I, part II, chap 11.

It is not by chance that I have used the word *represents.* The Governor of the state in effect represents the executive power; but he exercises only some of its rights.

The supreme magistrate, who is called the Governor, is placed alongside the legislature as a moderator and adviser. He is armed with a qualified veto that allows him to stop or at least to slow the legislature's movements as he wishes. To the legislative body, he sets forth the needs of the country and makes known the means that he judges useful to provide for those needs; for all enterprises that interest the entire nation [*sic:* state], he is the natural executor of its will.[47] In the absence of the legislature, he must take all proper measures to protect the state from violent shocks and unforeseen dangers.

The Governor combines in his hands all of the military power of the state. He is the commander of the militia and chief of the armed forces.

When the power of opinion, which men have agreed to grant to the law, is not recognized, the Governor advances at the head of the physical force of the state; he breaks down resistance and reestablishes customary order.

The Governor, moreover, does not get involved in the administration of the towns and counties, or at least he participates only very indirectly by the appointment of the justices of the peace whom he cannot thereafter remove.[48]

The Governor is an elected magistrate. Care is even taken, generally, to elect him only for one or two years; in this way, he always remains narrowly dependent[a] on the majority that created him.[b]

47. *In practice, it is not always the Governor who carries out the enterprises conceived by the legislature; often, at the same time that the latter votes a principle, it names special agents to oversee its execution.*

48. *In several states, the justices of the peace are not appointed by the Governor.*

a. The manuscript says: ". . . he is tied by the shortest possible chain to the body from which he emanates."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "This sentence is absolutely unintelligible. Why? What do you mean by *the body from which he emanates*? From what body does he emanate? And how is he tied to this body by the shortest possible chain by the fact that he is named for only two years? I repeat, I do not understand this paragraph at all" (YTC, CIIIb, 2 p. 112).

b. In the manuscript, at the end of the first chapter, is a cover sheet with the title:

Of the real influence that the President exercises in the conduct of public affairs [in the margin: Real and habitual influence in foreign affairs, almost entirely personal influence in domestic affairs./Study to do.]; in it, the following fragment on the Governor is found:

[The beginning is missing] The first of these two obligations is marked out in a clear and precise manner.

The second depends essentially on the circumstances that give it birth.

Among most nations, the same man or at least the same authority is charged with fulfilling these two obligations. He sees to it by himself or through his agents that order reigns, and when order begins to be disturbed, by some violent shock, some unforeseen event, he is still the one who temporarily takes the place of the missing national will and takes charge of remedying the evil.

In America, it is rarely so; the Governor is only occasionally charged with the peaceful execution of the laws. His functions consist, above all, of overseeing in a general manner the state of society, of enlightening the legislative body with his advice and of providing for the accidental needs of the state.

[In the margin: in a way, the Governor participates in legislative power by the veto.

In executive power by the administrative council.

In France it is the same man who is charged.

Start with the extreme concentration of powers.

There are some countries where the legislative, administrative and judicial powers are united.

There are some others where the legislative power is separate from the other two.

There are still others.]

Thus, it is not the Governor who is charged with using his authority to see that the towns execute their duties faithfully and punctually. If the legislature orders the opening of a canal or road, it is not generally the Governor who is charged with supervising the projects. The legislative power, at the same time it votes the principle, appoints special agents to supervise the execution.

But if an unforeseen danger emerges, if an enemy appears, if an armed revolt breaks out, then the Governor truly represents the executive power of the State. He commands and directs the police force.

In the accidental cases that I have just enumerated, the concentration of power on a single head is an indispensable condition for the existence of societies; thus the Governor of a state in America is the sole and absolute leader of the armed force.

But as for the daily, peaceful execution of the laws, powers are still divided to a degree that our imagination can scarcely conceive.

[In the margin: Only it is not judicial strength that comes to add to administrative strength. It is administrative strength that comes to join with judicial strength; now, liberty never has to fear judicial strength./

Concentration of powers and administrative *hierarchy* are two synonymous words, for where there is hierarchy you necessarily arrive at unity by moving upward.

Concentration of power is not a necessity so absolute./

Of the Political Effects of Administrative Decentralization in the United States[c]

Distinction to establish between governmental centralization and administrative centralization.—In the United States, no

I am beginning to believe that it is *definitively* the judicial power that *administers.* In America, therefore, you arrive, in a round about way, at the union of administrative and judicial powers.]

In order to understand this part of my subject well, I take the most robust individual with whom the state would have to deal, that is to say the town, and I ask how the town is made to obey the laws.

Here reread my town notes.

c. Letter of Édouard de Tocqueville to his brother, Alexis:

St Germain, 15 June [1834 (ed.)]./

I have read and examined your chapter very attentively, my dear friend; I send you the notes and remarks that I have made about it, as well as some observations that I have added to those of your father. All that you say about centralization is remarkable and well considered, but this chapter, the last in this thick folder, will be the subject of the most serious criticism from me.

The general tone of your work is serious, impartial, philosophical. You see things there in too lofty a way for your expressions to reveal passion. We guess your opinion, your sympathies, but you leave the need to conclude to the reader; you just accumulate enough facts and reasons, leading to the conclusion you desire, to carry the reader there inevitably; that is what a tightly reasoned work should do. The author should stay behind the curtain and be content to produce conviction without insisting upon it and saying: as for me, here is the conclusion that I draw from all this. This personal opinion adds nothing to the strength of reasoning, and can harm it to the extent that this perfect impartiality that inspires confidence is no longer seen in the author. I find, therefore, that in this last chapter you are too much on stage; you enter the lists armed with your personal opinion; you apply your principles to France; you enter into politics; it is no longer simply logical, clear and profound deduction from facts and institutions attentively studied that you present to the reader, but your own ideas about these facts, these institutions, about their consequences and their application. You judge, when the reader must be allowed to judge; you must only put all the pieces of evidence before him. His good sense must do the rest, and it will do so if your book is good.

Consider carefully that your book must not carry the date 1834, nor even the colors of France; to live in posterity, it must be removed from the influences of time and place.

To conclude: I believe that this chapter will be entirely as strong and stronger, when you have cut from it all that reveals the polemical and when you content your-

administrative centralization, but very great governmental centralization.—Some unfortunate effects that result in the United States from the extreme administrative decentralization.—Administrative advantages of this order of things.—The force that administers society, less steady, less enlightened, less skillful, very much greater than in Europe.—Political advantages of the same order of things.—In the United States, country makes itself felt everywhere.—Support that the governed give to the government.—Provincial institutions more necessary as the social state becomes more democratic.—Why.

Centralization is a word repeated constantly today, and, in general, no one tries to clarify its meaning.

Two very distinct types of centralization exist, however, that are important to know well.

Certain interests are common to all parts of the nation, such as the formation of general laws and the relationships of the people with foreigners.

Other interests are special to certain parts of the nation, such as town enterprises, for example.

To concentrate in the same place or in the same hands the power to direct the first is to establish what I will call governmental centralization.[d]

self with saying what centralization or rather decentralization is in America; what its effects, its action, its consequences are, without explaining what centralization has been, is still, and what has produced and produces it in France. Certainly, it is a great and interesting question, admirable to treat from the rostrum when you climb up there, but your book, which raises a host of these questions, does not argue any of them; why make an exception for this one?

Weigh these considerations.

Adieu, my dear friend, I embrace you with all my heart. Embrace *maman* for us. Alexandrine and the children are very well (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 63–65).

d. "The power to have *men* and *money,* such in sum is governmental centralization" (YTC, CVb, p. 12).

Beaumont thus summarizes the intervention of Tocqueville in favor of governmental centralization during the session of the constitutional commission on 31 May 1848:

Tocqueville. Impossible to touch on centralization in its constituent and general principles.—It is centralization that has saved France. Centralization is the power given

To concentrate in the same way the power to direct the second is to establish what I will name administrative centralization.[e]

There are points at which these two types of centralization merge. But by taking, as a whole, the matters that fall more particularly in the domain of each of them, we easily manage to distinguish them.[f]

It is understood that governmental centralization acquires immense strength when it is joined with administrative centralization. In this way, it accustoms men to making a complete and continuous abstraction of their will, to obeying, not once and on one point, but in everything and every day. Then, not only does it subdue them by force, but also it captures them by their habits; it isolates them and then, within the common mass, catches hold of them, one by one.

These two types of centralization lend each other mutual aid, attract each other; but I cannot believe that they are inseparable.

Under Louis XIV, France saw the greatest governmental centralization that could be imagined, since the same man made general laws and had the power to interpret them, represented France to the outside world and acted in its name. *L'Etat, c'est moi,* he said; and he was right.[g]

to the State, the duty to do everything inside and outside that is of general interest and is therefore in the interest of the State. The State must do everything in the country that matters strongly to it, either in the department or in the town.

The State must not intervene in what interests only the locality (YTC, DIVk).

e. "Administrative centralization does not create strength within a nation, but despotism" (YTC, CVb, p. 25).

f. Variant: "<≠The first, which I will call governmental centralization, is the concentration in a single hand or in the same place of the great social powers. The power to *make the* general *laws* and the *strength* to force obedience to them. The direction of the foreign affairs of the State and the means to succeed in them.

The second type of centralization, which I will name administrative centralization, is the concentration in a single hand or in the same place of the power to regulate the ordinary affairs of society, to rule the diverse parts of the State in the direction of their special affairs and to be in charge of the daily details of their existence.≠>"

g. "In France the administrative power has been placed at the center, not because it was in itself more useful there, perhaps the opposite, but in order to increase political power, which is different" (YTC, CVb, p. 10).

Under Louis XIV, however, there was much less administrative centralization than today.[h]

h. In the essay on the French administration drafted in response to the request for information from his son, Hervé de Tocqueville remarks:

> In the state of things as set up by the charter of 1814, the King is present everywhere. He has command over individual wills in order to unite them against the common danger. His action makes itself felt in all parts of the administration. Without him, it can do nothing; it moves if he allows; it stops when he so commands. We still do not know what the consequences will be of the notable changes that have taken place since 1830. Will not the principle of election introduced into the formation of all the *conseils* inspire in the provincial bodies pretensions of independence that are difficult to suppress; and will not this same principle applied to the nomination of officers of the national guard harm the passive obedience imposed on this armed force for public security? The newspapers that call themselves royalist ask for the reestablishment of the old provinces and insist daily on the creation of provincial assemblies that would be charged with the direction of local affairs. It is probable that these assemblies would tend constantly to increase their own power and that France would soon be no more than a vast federation, the weakest of governments, in the middle of the compact monarchies that surround it (YTC, CIIIe, pp. 38–39).

After having praised the effects of centralization on the accountability of the French towns, he adds:

> The tutelage of the King is excellent because it prevents poorly planned undertakings, useless or superfluous expenditures and the waste of funds. But one wonders if it has not gone too far, or rather if it is not surrounded by too many formalities. It seems that a part of the things that must be submitted to the ministry of the interior could be decided by the provincial authority (*Ibid.,* p. 40).

And further along:

> It will be concluded from what precedes that, if centralization has become a little too extensive in the relations between superior and inferior authorities, it becomes difficult to bear, above all, when it is exerted over the portion of private interests that are discussed and regulated administratively. In summary, it is useful to keep the tutelage of the administration in what concerns administrative expenditures. . . . Royal intervention in the affairs of the towns should be limited to the authorization to sell, acquire, exchange and borrow. Then again, small loans could be authorized by the prefect (*Ibid.,* pp. 41–42).

It is difficult to establish the precise influence that the report of the author's father, the letters of Chabrol and Blosseville, the conversations and correspondence with Sparks had on the formation of Tocqueville's ideas on centralization. If all of this material was able to help him clarify several points, it seems that his ideas on centralization date at least from the first days of his journey on American territory.

In a letter to his father of 3 June 1831, that is, four months before asking for help,

In our time, we see a power, England, where governmental centralization is carried to a very high degree; the State there seems to move like a single man; at will, it rouses immense masses, gathers and delivers, wherever it wants, the utmost of its strength.

England, which has done such great things for the last fifty years, does not have administrative centralization.

For my part, I cannot imagine that a nation could live or, above all, prosper without strong governmental centralization.

Tocqueville already referred to centralization: "All that there is of good in centralization seems to be as unknown as what there is of bad; no central idea seems to regulate the movement of the machine" (*OCB,* VII, p. 21). The theme is found again a month later in a letter also addressed to his father:

> Here, moreover, the central government is hardly anything. It is involved only with what relates to the state as a whole; the localities arrange their affairs all by themselves. That is how they have made the republic practicable. Everywhere individual ambition finds a small center of action at hand where its activity is exercised without danger for the state. I imagine that if the Bourbons, instead of fearing the organization of the towns, had sought little by little, from the beginning of the Restoration, to give importance to the localities, they would have had less difficulty struggling against the mass of passions that were raised against them (Albany, 4 July 1831, YTC, BIa2).

Two months before meeting Sparks, 29 June 1831, he had written to Louis de Kergorlay in nearly identical terms (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, I, pp. 233–34). See George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont* in *America,* p. 363; and James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* pp. 122–23. See note q for p. 150.

Tocqueville returns to this subject in his report on Algeria (*Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, especially pp. 331–38). There he denounces an excess of administrative centralization and a lack of political centralization. Algeria opens to Tocqueville a potential for political creativity in which he envisions using the theoretical tools forged in America. More than once, Tocqueville encounters in French Africa situations entirely similar to those at the beginning of the American colonies. His intervention in parliament retains a certain transatlantic flavor easy to detect. The project of buying land in Algeria with Kergorlay, which would come to nothing, is there to attest to his interest in the colony. See the reports and parliamentary interventions, published in the *Moniteur Universel,* 24 and 25 May, and 1, 9, 10, 11, and 12 June 1847 (reproduced in *OCB,* IX, pp. 423–512, and in *Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, pp. 308–409). His travel notes and other writings on Algeria also contain numerous references to centralization and to other American subjects. Cf. note f for p. 1210 of volume II.

But I think that administrative centralization is suitable only to enervate the peoples who submit to it, because it constantly tends to diminish the spirit of citizenship in them.[j] Administrative centralization, it is true, succeeds in gathering at a given time and in a certain place all the available forces of a nation, but it is harmful to the multiplication of those forces. It brings the nation victory on the day of battle and over time reduces its power. So it can work admirably toward the passing greatness of a man, not toward the lasting prosperity of a people.[k] [<≠I see there an element of despotism, but not of lasting national strength [in pencil: that would be].≠>]

You must be very careful; when someone says that a State is unable to act because it has no centralization, he is, without knowing it, almost always talking about governmental centralization.[m] The German empire, it is said repeatedly, has never been able to gain all that it possibly could from its forces. Agreed. But why? Because national force has never been centralized there; because the State has never been able to compel obedience to its general laws; because the separate parts of this great body have always had the right or the possibility to refuse their support to the agents of the common authority, even in what concerned all citizens; in other words, because there was no governmental centralization. The same remark applies to the Middle Ages. What produced all the miseries of feudal society was that the power, not only to administer, but also to govern, was divided among a thousand hands and fragmented in a thousand ways; the absence of any governmental centralization then prevented the nations of Europe from moving with energy toward any goal.

j. In the manuscript: ". . . to diminish the number of citizens. . . ."
k. In the manuscript: ". . . the greatness of a man, but not that of the State." Gustave de Beaumont:

False idea. Administrative centralization, by the effects that are concerned here, can work toward the greatness of the State just as toward that of a man, for this greatness can depend on a great battle that might have been lost without administrative centralization. Only, it is an obstacle to lasting greatness. As I do not know if the author agrees and do not know what idea he will adopt, I am not occupying myself with the writing (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 76).

m. The same idea appears in Beaumont, *Irlande,* vol. II, pp. 157–59.

[≠Moreover, like nearly all the harmful things of this world, administrative centralization is easily established and, once organized, can hardly ever be destroyed again except with the social body itself.[n]

When all the governmental force of a nation is gathered at one point, it is always easy enough for an enterprising genius to create administrative centralization. We ourselves have seen this phenomenon take place before our eyes. The Convention had centralized government to the highest degree, and Bonaparte needed only to will it in order to centralize the administration. It is true that for centuries in France our habits, mores and laws had always worked simultaneously toward the establishment of an intelligent and enlightened despotism.[*]

Once administrative centralization has lasted for a time, should the power that established it sincerely desire to destroy it, that same power almost always finds itself unable to bring about its ruin.

In fact, administrative centralization assumes a skillful organization of authority; it forms a complicated machine in which all the gears fit together and offer mutual support.

When the law-maker undertakes to scatter this administrative power that he has concentrated in a single place, he does not know where to begin, because he cannot remove one piece of the mechanism without disrupting the whole thing. At each moment, he sees that either nothing must be changed or everything; but what hand, so foolhardy, would dare to smash with one blow the administrative machinery of a great people?

To attempt it would be to invite disorder and confusion into the State.

The art of administration is assuredly a science, and peoples do not have more innate knowledge than individuals do. Delivered to itself without any transition, society would almost entirely cease to be administered.

Moreover, one of the greatest misfortunes of despotism is that it creates in the soul of the men submitted to it a kind of depraved taste for tranquillity and obedience, a sort of self-contempt, that ends by making them

n. In the margin: "≠Perhaps all of that to delete as irrelevant.≠"

[*]. "≠Truthfully, in France, the provinces have never *administered* themselves; it was always the authority of one man that was exercised and that regulated, directly or indirectly, all the affairs of society. Only, the administrative range was limited; the Revolution of 1789 just extended it.≠"

indifferent to their interests and enemies of their own rights. In nothing, however, is it more necessary for the governed themselves to show a definite and sustained will.

Nearly all the passionate and ambitious men who talk about centralization lack a real desire to destroy it. What happened to the Praetorians happens to them; they willingly suffer the tyranny of the emperor in the hope of gaining the empire. So decentralization, like liberty, is something that the leaders of the people promise, but that they never deliver. In order to gain and keep it, nations can count only on their own efforts; and if they themselves do not have a taste for it, the evil is without remedy.

Surprisingly, the same corporations, in whose name the power of self-administration has been passionately claimed, are often seen to accept without enthusiasm the portion of power granted to them and to show themselves almost eager to lay it down again, like a useless and heavy burden.≠][o]

We have seen that in the United States no administrative centralization existed. Scarcely a trace of hierarchy is found there. Decentralization there has been carried to a point that no European nation could bear, I think, without a profound uneasiness, and that, even in America, produces unfortunate effects. But, in the United States, governmental centralization exists to the highest degree. It would be easy to prove that national [*sic:* state] power is more concentrated there than it has been in any of the old monarchies of Europe. Not only is there just a single body in each state that makes laws; not only is there just a single power able to create political life around it; but in general, the Americans have avoided bringing together numerous district or county assemblies for fear that these assemblies would be tempted to move beyond their administrative attributions and hinder the movement of the government. In America the legislature of each state is faced by no power capable of resisting it. Nothing can stop it in its tracks, neither privileges, nor local immunity, nor personal influence, not even the authority of reason, for it represents the majority that claims to be the only

o. In the margin: "<{To review the part on centralization and perhaps shorten it. Advice of Beau[mont (ed.)].}>"

instrument of reason. So it has no limit to its action other than its own will. Next to it and close at hand is found the representative of the executive power who, with the aid of physical force, has to compel the discontent to obey.[p]

Weakness is found only in certain details of governmental action.

The American republics do not have a permanent armed force to suppress minorities, but up to now minorities there have never been reduced to starting a war; and the need for an army has not yet been felt.[q] Most often, the state uses town or county officials to act upon the citizens. Thus, for example, in New England, it is the town assessor who apportions the tax; the town tax collector levies it; the town treasurer makes sure that the tax revenue goes into the public treasury; and complaints that arise are submitted to the ordinary courts. Such a way to collect taxes is slow and awkward; at every instant it would hinder the movement of a government that had great pecuniary needs. In general, for everything essential to its exis-

p. In the manuscript: "Next to it and close at hand is found an executive power, absolute head of physical force, to compel the minorities to obedience."

q. In a letter to Ernest de Chabrol, Tocqueville explained:

> All the offices, like all the registers, have been open to us, but as for the government, we are still looking for it. It does not really exist at all. The legislature regulates everything that is of general interest; the municipalities have the rest.
>
> The advantage of this arrangement is to interest each locality very actively in its own affairs and greatly to feed political activity. But the disadvantage, even in America, seems to me to be to deprive the administration of any kind of uniformity, to make general measures impossible and to give to all useful enterprises a character of instability that you cannot imagine.
>
> We are, above all, in a position to notice these effects of the lack of centralization in what relates to the prisons: nothing fixed, nothing certain in their discipline; men replace each other; with them, the systems; the methods of administration change with each administrator, because no central authority exists that can give everything a common direction.
>
> The United States must thank heaven that until now they have been placed in such a way that they have no need for standing armies, for police or for skillful and sustained foreign policy. If one of these three needs ever presents itself, you can predict without being a prophet that they will lose their liberty or concentrate power more and more (Auburn, 16 July 1831, YTC, BIa2).

tence, you would want the government to have officials of its own, chosen and removable by it, and to have ways to move ahead rapidly; but it will always be easy for the central power, organized as it is in America, to introduce more energetic and effective means of action, as needed.[*]

So it is not, as is often repeated, because there is no centralization in the United States, that the republics of the New World will perish.[r] It can be asserted that the American governments, very far from not being centralized enough, are centralized too much; I will prove it later. Each day the legislative assemblies devour some of the remains of governmental powers; they tend to gather them all unto themselves, just as the Convention did.[s] The social power, thus centralized, constantly changes hands, because it is subordinate to popular power. Often it happens to lack wisdom and foresight, because it can do everything. That is where the danger to it is found. So it is because of its very strength, and not as a result of its weakness, that the social power is threatened with perishing one day.[t]

[*]. The creation of paid and standing military bodies to suppress or to prevent insurrections has already happened in Massachusetts and in Pennsylvania. See *Federalist,* p. 115 [No. 28 (ed.)].

r. Variant in a draft: ". . . but because the central power is constantly in different hands and is subordinated to popular power, a power eminently variable by nature and, for this reason, incapable of governing society for long" (YTC, CVb, p. 1).

s. In a first version, under a paper glued into place: "{Executive power is nothing while remaining in their hands. This is, moreover, an inherent weakness in completely [uncertain reading (ed.)] democratic government. See the *Federalist,* p. 213 [No. 48 (ed.)].}"

t. In the margin:

≠When a people renounces the centralization of power, the need for administrative courts is felt; now, I admit that it is always with terror that I see the administration and the judicial system concentrated in the same hands. Of all tyrannies, the worst is the one that covers itself in legal forms. Administrative courts, once subservient, seem to me one of the most fearsome instruments of despotism.≠

Recall the words of Montesquieu: "No tyranny is more cruel than the one you exercise under the cloak of the laws and with the colors of justice: when, so to speak, you drown the unfortunate on the very plank on which they were saved." *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1951), II, chapter XIV, p. 144. Cf. note o for p. 1228 of the fourth volume.

Administrative decentralization produces several diverse effects in America.

We have seen that the Americans had almost entirely isolated administration from government; in that, they seem to me to have gone beyond the limits of healthy reason, because order, even in secondary things, is still a national interest.[49]

The state has no administrative officials of its own, who are placed in permanent posts at different points of the territory and to whom it can give a common impulse; the result is that it rarely attempts to establish general rules of public order. Now, the need for these rules makes itself sharply felt. The European often notices their absence. This appearance of disorder, which reigns on the surface, persuades him, at first view, that there is complete anarchy in the society; it is only by examining things in depth that he corrects his error.

[This absence of national (v: central) administration often prevents the different states from engaging in certain undertakings of a general interest, the execution of which would present great difficulties if handed over to the localities and left to temporary and special agents. Besides, it is always to be feared that, without a permanent authority to centralize and supervise, the work, once done, might self-destruct.

As for differences that would make themselves felt between the administrative principles of one portion of the territory and those of another, differences that would be very great in Europe are not noticeable in America. The states are not so vast as to present examples; and above all, their population is too perfectly homogeneous and too enlightened for these differences to be lasting. All the counties, moreover, are forced to obey general laws that are the same for each of them.

49. *The authority that represents the state, even when it does not itself administer, must not, I think, relinquish the right to inspect local administration. I suppose, for example, that a government agent, placed at a set post in each county, might refer crimes that are committed in the towns and in the county to the judiciary. In this case, would not orderly organization be more uniformly followed without compromising the independence of the localities? Now, nothing like this exists in America. Above the county courts, there is nothing; and in a way, only by chance are these courts made officially aware of administrative crimes that they must suppress.*

≠I recognize as well that in America the views that direct the administration are rarely permanent. It is difficult to decentralize administrative power without putting a portion of it back into the hands of the people; and the people never proceed except by momentary efforts and sudden impulses.

I come to the great objection that has been made from time immemorial to the system of administrative decentralization, the objection that encompass [*sic*] all of the others.≠

The partisans of centralization in Europe . . .]

Certain enterprises interest the entire state and yet cannot be carried out because there is no national [*sic:* state] administration to direct them. Abandoned to the care of the towns and counties, left to elected and temporary agents, they lead to no result or produce nothing lasting.

The partisans of centralization in Europe maintain that governmental power administers the localities better than they would be able to administer themselves. Perhaps that is true, when the central power is enlightened, and the localities are not; when it is active, and they are passive; when it is in the habit of taking action, and they are in the habit of obeying. You can even understand that the more centralization increases, the more this double tendency grows; and the capacity of the one and incapacity of the other become more striking.

But I deny that this is so when the people are enlightened, alert to their interests, and accustomed to consider them as they do in America.

I am persuaded, on the contrary, that in this case the collective strength of the citizens will always be more powerful for producing social well-being than the authority of the government.

I admit that it is difficult to indicate with certainty how to awaken a people who are asleep, how to give them the passions and enlightenment that they lack. To persuade men that they should take charge of their own affairs is, I am aware, a difficult enterprise. Often it would be less awkward to interest them in the details of court etiquette than in the repair of their town hall [{and I would conclude, if you want, that there are certain nations [v: peoples] who cannot do without despotism.}].

But I also think that when the central administration claims to replace

completely the free participation of those who have the primary interest, it is mistaken or wants to deceive you.

A central power, as enlightened, as skillful as can be imagined, cannot by itself encompass all the details of the life of a great people. It cannot, because such a task exceeds human power. When, on its own, it wants to create and put into operation so many different mechanisms, it either contents itself with a very incomplete result or exhausts itself in useless efforts.

Centralization easily manages, it is true, to subject the outward actions of men to a certain uniformity that is ultimately loved for itself, apart from the things to which it is applied; like the devout who worship the statue, forgetting the divinity it represents. Centralization succeeds without difficulty in imparting a steady appearance to everyday affairs; in skillfully dictating the details of social order; in suppressing slight disturbances and small transgressions; in maintaining society in a *status quo* which is not exactly either decadence or progress; in keeping a kind of administrative somnolence in the social body that administrators customarily call good order and public tranquillity.[50] In a word, it excels at preventing, not at doing. When it is a matter of profoundly shaking society or moving it rapidly, centralization loses its strength. As soon as its measures need the support of individuals, you are totally surprised by the weakness of this immense machine; it suddenly finds itself reduced to impotence.

Then sometimes centralization, in desperation, tries to call citizens to its aid. But it says to them: "You will act as I want, as long as I want, and exactly in the way that I want. You will take charge of these details without aspiring to direct the whole; you will work in the shadows, and later you will judge my work by its results." Under such conditions you do not gain the support

50. *China seems to me to offer the most perfect symbol of the type of social well-being that can be provided by a very centralized administration to the people who submit to it. Travelers tell us that the Chinese have tranquillity without happiness, industry without progress, stability without strength, physical order without public morality. Among them, society functions always well enough, never very well. I imagine that when China opens to Europeans, the latter will find there the most beautiful model of administrative centralization that exists in the universe.*

of human will, which requires liberty in its ways, responsibility in its actions. Man is made so that he prefers remaining immobile to moving without independence toward an unknown end.[u]

[During the almost forty years that we in France have completed the system of administrative centralization, what great improvement has been introduced into the state of the civilization of the people? Who would compare our social progress to that of the English during the same period? But, centralization does not exist in England.]

I will not deny that in the United States you often regret the lack of those uniform rules that seem constantly to watch over each of us.

From time to time, great examples of unconcern and of social negligence are found there. Here and there crude blemishes appear that seem completely at odds with the surrounding civilization.

Useful undertakings that require constant care and rigorous exactitude in order to succeed often end up being abandoned; for in America, as elsewhere, the people proceed by momentary efforts and sudden impulses.[v]

The European, accustomed to finding an official constantly at hand who gets involved in nearly everything, becomes used to these different mechanisms of town administration with difficulty. In general it can be said that the small details of social order that make life pleasant and easy are neglected in America; but the guarantees essential to man in society exist there as much as everywhere else. Among the Americans, the force that administers the State is much less stable, less enlightened, less skillful, but is one hundred times greater than in Europe. When all is said and done, there is no country in the world where men make as many efforts to create social well-being. I know of no people who have managed to establish schools so numerous and so effective; churches more appropriate to the religious needs of the inhabitants; town roads better maintained. So, in the United States, do not look for uniformity and permanence of views, minute attention to

u. To the side, in the manuscript: "≠Louis advises placing this elsewhere, but where?≠"

v. In the margin: "≠{The small details of} social {order} are generally neglected, but in short the guarantees essential to man in society exist as much in America as everywhere else.≠"

details, perfection in administrative procedures.[51] What is found there is the image of strength, a little wild, it is true, but full of power; of life, accompanied by accidents, but also by activities and efforts.[x]

I will admit, moreover, if you want, that the villages and counties of the United States would be administered more profitably by a central authority that was located far from them and remained unknown to them, than by officials drawn from within. I will acknowledge, if you insist, that more security would reign in America, that wiser and more judicious use of social resources would be made there, if the administration of the entire country were concentrated in a single hand. The political advantages that the Americans gain from the system of decentralization would still make me prefer it to the opposite system.

51. *A talented writer who, in a comparison between the finances of the United States and those of France, proved that the mind could not always make up for knowledge of facts, rightly reproaches the Americans for a type of confusion that prevails in their town budgets; and, after giving the model of a departmental budget in France, he adds: "Thanks to centralization, admirable creation of a great man [which is slandered without knowing it (ed.)], municipal budgets, from one end of the kingdom to the other, those of the largest cities, like those of the most humble towns, show the same order and method."*[w] *That, certainly, is a result that I admire; but I see most of these French towns, whose accounts are so perfect, plunged into a profound ignorance of their true interests and given over to an apathy so invincible, that society there seems rather to vegetate than to live; on the other hand, I notice in these same American towns, whose budgets are not drawn up according to methodical or, above all, uniform plans, an enlightened, active, enterprising population; there I gaze upon a society always at work. This spectacle astonishes me; for in my eyes the principal end of a good government is to produce the well-being of peoples and not to establish a certain order in the midst of their misery. So I wonder if it would not be possible to attribute to the same cause the prosperity of the American town and the apparent disorder of its finances, the distress of the French town and the perfection of its budget. In any case, I distrust a good that I find intermingled with so much evil, and I am easily consoled about an evil that is offset by so much good.*

w. Sébastien L. Saulnier, "Nouvelles observations sur les finances des États-Unis, en réponse à une brochure publié par le Général La Fayette," *Revue Britannique,* n. s., 8, October 1831, pp. 195–260), p. 239. On this article and the polemic over American finances, see note j for pp. 345–50.

x. "The admirable effect of republican governments (where they can subsist) is not to present a glimpse of *regularity,* of *methodical order* in the administration of a people, but the *picture of life.* Liberty does not carry out each of its enterprises with the same perfection as intelligent despotism, but in the long run, it produces more than intelligent despotism" (pocket notebook 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 184).

So what, after all, if there is an authority always at the ready, [{that muzzles dogs [v: waters public walkways] during the heat wave, that breaks up river ice during the winter}] that makes sure that my pleasures are peaceful, that flies before my steps to turn all dangers aside without the need for me even to think about them; if this authority, at the same time that it removes the smallest thorn from my route, is absolute master of my liberty and life; if it monopolizes movement and existence to such a degree that everything around it must languish when it languishes, sleep when it sleeps, perish if it dies?

There are such nations in Europe where the inhabitant considers himself a sort of settler, indifferent to the destiny of the place where he lives. The greatest changes occur in his country without his participation; he does not even know precisely what happened; he surmises; he has heard about the event by chance. Even more, the fortune of his village, the policing of his street, the fate of his church and his presbytery have nothing to do with him; he thinks that all these things are of no concern to him whatsoever, and that they belong to a powerful stranger called the government. [v: At each moment, you think you hear him say: what concern is this to me; it is the business of the authorities to provide for all of this, not mine.] As for him, he enjoys these benefits like a usufructuary, without a sense of ownership and without ideas of any improvement whatsoever. This disinterestedness in himself goes so far that if his own security or that of his children is finally compromised, instead of working himself to remove the danger, he crosses his arms to wait until the entire nation comes to his aid. Moreover, this man, even though he has so completely sacrificed his own free will, likes to obey no more than anyone else. He submits, it is true, to the will of a clerk; but, like a defeated enemy, he likes to defy the law as soon as power withdraws. Consequently, you see him oscillate constantly between servitude and license.

When nations have reached this point, they must modify their laws and mores or perish, for the source of public virtues has dried up; subjects are still found there, but citizens are seen no more.

I say that such nations are prepared for conquest. If they do not vanish from the world stage, it is because they are surrounded by similar or inferior nations. It is because within them there still remains a kind of indefinable

patriotic instinct, I do not know what unthinking pride in the name that the nation carries. It is because there still remains I do not know what vague memory of past glory, not precisely linked to anything, but enough to impart an impulse of preservation as needed.

You would be wrong to reassure yourself by thinking that certain peoples have made prodigious efforts to defend a native land where, so to speak, they lived as strangers. Be very careful here, and you will see that in that case religion was almost always their principal motive.

For them, the duration, glory or prosperity of the nation had become sacred dogmas, and by defending their native land, they also defended this holy city in which they were all citizens.

The Turkish populations have never taken any part in the direction of the affairs of society; they accomplished immense enterprises, however, as long as they saw the triumph of the religion of Mohammed in the conquests of the Sultans. Today religion is disappearing; despotism alone remains for them; they are in decline.[y]

y. Original version in one of the drafts:

There are peoples living under despotism who have a great sentiment of nationality, however; you see them making immense sacrifices to save a native land where they live without interests and without rights.

But then be very careful here; for them, it is always religion which takes the place of patriotism.

For them, the duration, glory or prosperity of the nation is a religious dogma. By defending their country, they defend this holy city in which they are all citizens.

The Turkish populations have never taken any part in the direction of the affairs of society. They accomplished immense things, however, as long as they saw the triumph of the religion of Mohammed in the conquests of the Sultan. Today religion is disappearing; only despotism remains for them, and they are in decline.

The Russian, who does not even have an interest in the land on which he was born, is one of the bravest soldiers of Europe; and he burns his house and harvest to ruin the enemy. But it is the Holy Empire that he defends, and when he dies for his country, heaven opens and his reward is ready.

Despotic governments are made formidable when the peoples they direct are transformed by a religious enthusiasm. Then the unity of power, instead of harming the social power, does nothing more than direct it; nations in this condition have the strength of free peoples, without the disadvantages of liberty. Forces are combined and there is a single direction. Their impact is nearly irresistible. . . . Then a strange thing happens: the harder and more oppressive the government, the more it does

Montesquieu, by giving despotism a strength of its own, gave it, I think, an honor that it did not deserve. Despotism, all by itself, can sustain nothing lasting. When you look closely, you notice that what made absolute governments prosper for a long time was religion, and not fear.

No matter what, you will never find true power among men except in the free participation of wills.[z] Now, in the world, only patriotism or re-

great things; the more unfortunate the nation, the more it makes the effort to protect a soil that it does not possess; the less these men cling to life, the better they defend it. It is not with this world in view that religious people act in this way; and the more miserable they are, the more easily they die. . . .

Montesquieu, by giving despotism a lasting strength, gave it an honor that it does not deserve. Despotism is something so bad by nature that, all by itself, it can neither create nor maintain anything. Fear, all by itself, can only serve for a while.

When you look closely, you notice that what makes absolute governments last and act is religion, and not fear; religion, principle of strength that they use, but that is not in them. When a nation still enslaved ceases to be religious, there is no human means to keep it bundled together for long.

In summary, I am profoundly convinced that there is no lasting strength except in the collaboration of human wills. So to apply this force to the preservation of societies, men must have an interest in this world or the other (YTC, CVe, pp. 55–57).

Tocqueville defends the preeminence of social and intellectual habits over laws; it is therefore inevitable that he finds Montesquieu's idea of despotism based far too much on legal criteria. The author seems to be more concerned with the problems envisioned by Montesquieu than with the solutions he proposes, which does not, for all that, reduce the influence of the author of *Esprit des lois.* Nonetheless, Kergorlay denies a stylistic influence of Montesquieu on his friend ("Étude littéraire sur Alexis de Tocqueville," *Correspondant* 52 (1861): 758–59): "I would not go so far as to say that Tocqueville never, at any period of his literary life, sought in Montesquieu some models to follow. But it was only in a quite secondary manner, not very lasting and not very effective." On the other hand, Kergorlay recognizes the influence of Pascal, Voltaire and La Bruyère. On the influence of Montesquieu, see Melvin Richter, "Modernity and Its Distinctive Threats to Liberty: Montesquieu and Tocqueville on New Forms of Illegitimate Domination," in Michael Hereth and Jutta Höffken, eds., *Alexis de Tocqueville. Zur Politik in der Demokratie,* Baden Baden: Nomos, 1981, pp. 362–98.

z. Édouard de Tocqueville: "How did Louis XIV, Peter the Great, Frederick, Bonaparte, not give great power to their nations? And with them what became of the free collaboration of wills?" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 113).

ligion can make the totality of citizens march for long toward the same goal.

It does not depend on the laws to revive beliefs that are fading; but it does depend on the laws to interest men in the destinies of their country. It depends on the laws to awaken and to direct that vague patriotic instinct that never leaves the human heart, and, by linking it to thoughts, passions, daily habits, to make it into a thoughtful and lasting sentiment. And do not say that it is too late to try; nations do not grow old in the same way that men do. Each generation born within the nation is like a new people who comes to offer itself to the hand of the law-maker.

What I admire most in America are not the *administrative* effects of decentralization, but its *political* effects. In the United States, country makes itself felt everywhere. It is an object of solicitude from the village to the whole Union. The inhabitant becomes attached to each of the interests of his country as to his very own. He glories in the glory of the nation; in the successes that it achieves, he believes that he recognizes his own work, and he rises with them; he rejoices in the general prosperity that benefits him. For his country, he has a sentiment analogous to that you feel for your family, and it is even by a kind of egoism that he is interested in the State.

Often the European sees in the public official only force; the American sees the law. So it can be said that in America, a man never obeys a man, but obeys justice or the law.

Consequently, he has conceived an often exaggerated, but almost always salutary opinion of himself. Without fear, he relies on his own powers that seem to him all sufficient. An individual conceives the idea of some enterprise; even if this enterprise has some direct connection with the well-being of society, it does not occur to him to address himself to public authority to gain its support. He makes his plan known, offers to carry it out, calls other individual powers to his aid, and struggles hand-to-hand against all obstacles. Often, doubtlessly, he succeeds less than if the State took his place; but in the long run the general result of all of these individual undertakings surpasses by a great deal what the government would be able to accomplish.[a]

a. The example was provided to Tocqueville by Mr. Quincy, President of Harvard

Since administrative authority is placed next to the administered, and in a way represents them, it excites neither jealousy nor hate. Since its means of action are limited, each person feels that he cannot rely on it alone.

So when the administrative power intervenes within the circle of its attributions, it does not find itself alone, as in Europe. No one believes that the duties of individuals have ceased because the public representative happens to act. On the contrary, each person guides, supports and sustains him.

By joining the action of individual powers with the action of social powers, you often succeed in doing what the most concentrated and energetic administration would be unable to carry out.[I]

I could cite many facts to support what I am advancing; but I prefer to present only one and to choose the one I know best.

In America, the means put at the disposal of authority to uncover crimes and to pursue criminals are few.

Police control does not exist; passports are unknown. Officers of the court in the United States cannot be compared to ours. The agents of the public prosecutor's office are few; [they do not communicate with each other;] they do not always have the right to initiate legal proceedings; preliminary investigation is rapid and oral. I doubt, however, that, in any country, crime as rarely escapes punishment.

The reason for it is that everyone believes himself interested in providing proof of the crime and in catching the offender.

I saw, during my stay in the United States, the inhabitants of a county, where a great crime had been committed, spontaneously form committees for the purpose of pursuing the guilty party and delivering him to the courts.

In Europe, the criminal is an unfortunate who is fighting to hide from the agents of power; the population in a way helps in the struggle. In America, he is an enemy of the human species, and he has all of humanity against him.

University, 20 September 1831 (non-alphabetic notebooks 1 and 2, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 89–90).

I believe provincial institutions useful to all peoples; but none seems to me to have a more real need for these institutions than the one whose social state is democratic.

In an aristocracy, a certain order is sure to be maintained in the midst of liberty.

Since those who govern have a great deal to lose, order has a great interest for them.

In an aristocracy, it can be said as well that the people are sheltered from the excesses of despotism, because organized forces are always found, ready to resist the despot.

A democracy without provincial institutions possesses no guarantee against similar evils.

How can a multitude that has not learned how to make use of liberty in small things, be made to support it in larger ones?

How to resist tyranny in a country where each individual is weak, and where individuals are united by no common interest?

So those who are afraid of license and those who fear absolute power must equally desire the gradual development of provincial liberties.[b]

I am convinced, moreover, that there are no nations more at risk of falling under the yoke of administrative centralization than those whose social state is democratic.

Several causes lead to this result, but among others, these:

The permanent tendency of these nations is to concentrate all governmental power in the hands of the single power that directly represents the people, because, beyond the people, nothing more is seen except equal individuals merged into a common mass.

b. Once a man has contracted the habit of obeying a foreign and arbitrary will in nearly all the actions of his life, and notably in those that come closest to the human heart, how do you expect him to conceive a true taste for great political liberty and independence in general actions?

Town institutions not only give *the art of using great political liberty,* but they bring about *the true taste* for liberty. Without them, the taste for political liberty comes over peoples like childish desires or the hotheadedness of a young man that the first obstacle extinguishes and calms (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 1–2; the same fragment is found, almost word for word, in YTC, CVe, p. 61).

Now, when the same power is already vested with all the attributes of government, it is highly difficult for it not to try to get into the details of administration [{so you often see democratic peoples simultaneously establish liberty and the instruments of despotism}]; and it hardly ever fails to find eventually the opportunity to do so. We have witnessed it among ourselves.

[≠If we shift our view to times closer to us, we see a strange confusion prevailing in most of the States of Europe. Kings descend into the administration of {the narrowest communal interests}.≠][c]

In the French Revolution,[d] there were two opposing movements that must not be confused: one favorable to liberty, the other favorable to despotism.[e]

c. In the margin: "≠That is, you have wanted to make a city without citizens, a republic with subjects [v: servants] submitted to a clerk [v: and transform servants of a clerk into republicans] [v: and place the spirit of liberty in the very midst of servitude]." On the idea of citizenship as participation, see Doris S. Goldstein, "Alexis de Tocqueville's Concept of Citizenship," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 108, no. 1 (1964): 39–53.

d. "Ask Mr. Feuillet if there is a book that can give basic ideas about the French constitution in 1789" (YTC, CVb, p. 33). Feuillet was the librarian at the Bibliothèque Royale. See note v for pp. 1110–13 of the fourth volume.

e. Of centralization./

When you speak about centralization you are constantly struggling in the shadows because you have not made the distinction that I established above between governmental centralization and administrative centralization.

You blame or praise without knowing why.

There are people who cite as one of the advantages of centralization the establishment of the present system where everything ends at a supreme court. As one of the proofs of the evils caused by decentralization, they cite the old system of *parlements.* They do not see that the system of *parlements* was a gross abuse and not a natural consequence of the system of decentralization. If there is one thing in the world that is a national necessity, it is the unity of law. For the law to be *one,* two things are needed: 1. that it comes from a single authority, 2. that it is interpreted by a single authority. For to interpret the law is, in a way, to make it again. That is how all the American republics have understood it.

A judicial system where seventeen sovereign courts can interpret the same law at the same time, on the same question, in seventeen different ways is a political mon-

strosity.[1] For a nation to bear such a division of the judicial system without itself dividing, all the real power in the nation must be in hands other than judicial ones. That is what happened in France, where the King easily made his will prevail over the courts in all things that essentially concerned politics and acutely interested the State, and where he let anarchy reign only on secondary points that did not matter much to the general course of public affairs. That was a necessary cure, but one almost as bad as the illness. Interpretation, instead of being made by a central judicial power, was made by a (illegible word) council [v: power]. France of the old regime, already much too centralized relative to several objects, was evidently not centralized enough on the former. And when the partisans of decentralization stand on this ground, they are wrong. They defend what they should concede at the beginning.

What has caused our greatest misfortunes in France is that there is a host of excellent principles that we have never known and felt except by their exaggerated consequences. Strange thing! We have often experienced the abuse of the thing, without knowing the thing itself.[2]

Decentralization is among this number. Apart from our continental situation, which has always made us feel more acutely the need for the concentration of power, decentralization has never appeared to us other than as a division of the essential rights of sovereignty, that is, as the most active agent of oppression and anarchy. Today, we have not learned better; the word decentralization represents in our mind only a multitude of small sovereigns, judging with sovereignty, dispensing justice, coining money. And for us, it is even quite difficult to place this power, divided in this way, in hands other than those of an envious, haughty, exclusive aristocracy. Iudex irae. England, on the contrary, alone among all the peoples of Europe, had the good fortune that, from the beginning, the part of the central power was largely established. In that country, the system of decentralization, contained right away within true limits, awakens only ideas of order, prosperity and glory. The system of decentralization made and still makes the strength of England. England had strong and despotic kings at a time when royalty was too crude to want to take charge of everything. The kings created governmental centralization; the mores and the social state, administrative decentralization.

Moreover, we must not be mistaken about this. It is democratic governments that arrive most quickly at administrative centralization while losing their political liberty. Aristocracies struggle an infinitely longer time, because the power of resistance is greater in each of the parts of the social body organized in this way.

1. The American Union, which is a confederation, is more centralized on this point than was the *absolute monarchy of France.*

2. Thus in France, when the King intervened in the administration of justice, the abuse of governmental centralization was pointed out; when, on the contrary, the courts were free to establish judicial anarchy, all minds felt the abuse of administrative decentralization. But no one perceived the precise limits of the one and the other" (YTC, CVe, pp. 57–60, and BIIb, pp. 6–8).

In the old monarchy, the King alone made the law.

Below the sovereign power were found some remnants, half destroyed, of provincial institutions. These provincial institutions were incoherent, poorly ordered, often absurd. In the hands of the aristocracy, they had sometimes been instruments of oppression.

The Revolution has declared itself against royalty and provincial institutions at the same time. It has mingled in the same hatred all that had preceded it, absolute power and what could temper its rigors; it has been simultaneously republican and centralizing.

This double character of the French Revolution is a fact that the friends of absolute power have laid hold of with great care. When you see them defend administrative centralization, do you think that they are working in favor of despotism? Not at all; they are defending one of the great conquests of the Revolution.[K] In this way, they can remain a man of the people and an enemy of the rights of the people, secret servant of tyranny, and declared friend of liberty.[f]

I have visited the two nations that have developed the system of provincial liberties to the highest degree, and I have heard the voice of the parties dividing these nations.

In America, I found men who secretly longed to destroy the democratic institutions of their country. In England, I found others who openly attacked the aristocracy; I did not meet a single one who did not view provincial liberty as a great good.[g]

In these two countries, I saw the ills of the State imputed to an infinity of diverse causes, but never to town liberty.

I heard citizens attribute the greatness or the prosperity of their native land to a multitude of reasons; but I heard all of them put provincial liberty in the first rank and list it at the head of all the other advantages.

When men, who are naturally so divided that they do not agree on either religious doctrines or on political theories, fall into agreement on a single

f. The manuscript indicates that Tocqueville at one moment considered the possibility of placing here a section entitled OF THE EXCELLENCE OF TOWN INSTITUTIONS.

g. To the side: "≠Aristocrats and democrats, royalists and republicans.≠"

fact, a fact that they can best judge, since it occurs everyday before their eyes, am I to believe that this fact might be wrong?

Only peoples who have only a few or no provincial institutions deny their utility; that is, only those who do not know the thing at all, speak ill of it.

CHAPTER 6[a]

Of the Judicial Power in the United States and Its Action on Political Society[b]

The Anglo-Americans have kept all the characteristics that distinguish the judicial power among other peoples.—They have,

a. This chapter and the following one are not found in the copy read by friends and family, which suggests that they were included belatedly in the project. From the beginning of the voyage, Tocqueville, as a lawyer, showed a lively interest in how the American judicial power functioned. Notebook F of his travel notes is devoted exclusively to civil and criminal law in America (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 296–335); and in the first plans of the book (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 20–31) the judicial power, as well as the civil and criminal laws, occupy an important place. Beyond the notebook cited, a great number of commentaries on the American judicial power appear in the other notebooks of the travel diaries and in the correspondence. There are certain indications that Tocqueville had in particular asked his friend, Élie de Beaumont, judge at Versailles, for information about the French judicial power. We recall that Tocqueville used this method of comparing the situation in France with that in the United States when he considered centralization. A letter from Tocqueville to another magistrate, Ernest de Chabrol, dated November 26, 1831 (YTC, BI a2) contains, along with a description of the American jurisdictional organization, a reference to an earlier note on justices of the peace; the note was a reflection made in a letter (apparently lost) addressed to Élie de Beaumont. Another possible source of information is mentioned in a rough draft: "Speak to Mr. Livingston about the American judicial system" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 10).

b. Judicial power./

The most original and most difficult part to understand of all the American constitution. Elsewhere there have been confederations, a representative system, a democracy; but no where a judicial power organized as that of the Union.

How the judicial power of the Union is conservative without harming that great principle of the necessity of a single dominating principle in constitutions. It slows, it cannot stop the people, because the latter by changing the constitution can always arrive at what they desire.

How all the laws that challenge the judicial power in America are truly destructive of order and of liberty (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 40).

however, made it into a great political power.—How.—How the judicial system of the Anglo-Americans differs from all others.—Why American judges have the right to declare laws unconstitutional.—How American judges exercise this right.—Precautions taken by the law-maker to prevent abuse of this right.

I have thought that a separate chapter must be devoted to the judicial power. Its political importance is so great that it seemed to me that talking about it in passing would diminish it in the eyes of readers.

There have been confederations elsewhere than in America; we have seen republics in places other than on the shores of the New World; the representative system is adopted in several States in Europe; but I do not think that until now any nation in the world has constituted the judicial power in the same way as the Americans.[c]

[≠The Americans have established the judicial power as counterbalance and barrier to the legislative power. They have made it a political power of the first order.≠]

What is most difficult for a foreigner to understand in the United States is the judicial organization. There is, so to speak, no political event in which he does not hear the authority of the judge invoked; and he naturally concludes that in the United States the judge is one of the premier political powers. Then when he comes to examine the constitution of the courts, he discovers at first view only judicial attributions and habits. In his eyes, the magistrate seems never to get into public affairs except by chance; but this very chance recurs daily.

When the Parlement of Paris made remonstrances and refused to register an edict, when on its own it summoned a corrupt official to appear before it, the political action of the judicial power could be recognized. But nothing similar is seen in the United States. [{The American judge never enters

c. "≠In my eyes, the constitution of the judicial power forms the newest and most original portion of the entire political system of the Americans≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 16–17).

into direct conflict [v: is never found battling] with the political powers strictly defined.}]

The Americans have kept all the characteristics by which the judicial power is customarily recognized. They have enclosed it exactly within the circle where it habitually moves.

The first characteristic of the judicial power, among all peoples, is to serve as arbiter. For the courts to take action, a case must be brought. For there to be a judge, there must be proceedings. As long as a law does not give rise to a case, the judicial power has no occasion to get involved with it. The judicial power is there, but it doesn't see the law. When a judge, as part of a trial, attacks a law relating to the trial, he extends the circle of his attributions, but he does not go beyond them, since in a way he must judge the law in order to be able to judge the trial. When he delivers a verdict on a law, outside of a trial, he goes completely beyond his sphere and enters into that of the legislative power.

The second characteristic of the judicial power is to deliver a verdict concerning particular cases and not concerning general principles. Should a judge, while deciding a particular question, make it certain that each of the consequences of the same principle is struck down in the same way, the principle becomes sterile. While destroying the general principle in this way, he remains within the natural circle of his action. But should a judge directly attack the general principle and destroy it without having a particular case in view, he goes beyond the circle where all peoples have agreed to enclose him; he becomes something more important, perhaps more useful than a magistrate, but he ceases to represent the judicial power.

The third characteristic of the judicial power is to be able to act only when it is called upon, or, following the legal expression, when it is apprised. This characteristic is not found as generally as the other two. I believe, however, that, despite exceptions, it can be considered as essential. By its nature, the judicial power is passive; to stir, it must be put in motion. Someone denounces a crime before it and it punishes the guilty; someone calls upon it to redress an injustice and it redresses it; someone submits an act to it and it interprets it; but it does not go on its own to pursue criminals, seek out injustice and examine facts. In a way the judicial power would do vi-

olence to this passive nature if it took initiative on its own and set itself up as censor of the laws.

[<Two things must not be confused. The same man can be vested with political and judicial powers without thereby mingling political and judicial power. The mind sees them as distinct in the very midst of the confusion of actions. When the Parlement of Paris issued decisions, registered edicts and made regulations for public order, it formed only a single body; but within it three different powers were easily distinguished>.]

The Americans have kept these three distinctive characteristics for the judicial power. The American judge can deliver a verdict only when there is a lawsuit. He can never get involved except in a particular case; and to act he must always wait to be apprised.

So the American judge perfectly resembles the magistrates of other nations. He is vested, however, with an immense political power [that the latter do not have. His power forms the most formidable barrier to the encroachments of the legislature].

What causes that? He moves within the same circle and uses the same means as other judges; why does he possess a power that the latter do not have?

The cause is this single fact: the Americans have recognized the right of judges to base their decisions on the *constitution* rather than on the *laws.* In other words, they have allowed them not to apply laws that would appear unconstitutional to them.

I know that a similar right has sometimes been claimed by the courts of other countries; but it has never been granted to them. In America, it is recognized by all powers; no party, not even a man is met who contests it.

The explanation for this must be found in the very principle of American constitutions.

In France, the constitution is, or is considered to be, an immutable work.[d] No power can change anything in it; such is the accepted theory.[e] L

d. In the margin: "≠The oath is therefore a very rational consequence of very absurd principles.≠"

e. In the margin, with a mark: "≠Is this true?≠"

In England, Parliament is recognized to have the right to modify the constitution. In England, therefore, the constitution can change constantly, or rather it does not exist at all. Parliament is, at the same time, the legislative body and the constituent body.[M]

In America, political theories are simpler and more rational.

An American constitution is not considered to be immutable, as in France; it cannot be modified by the ordinary powers of society, as in England. It forms a work apart that, representing the will of all the people, binds legislators as well as ordinary citizens; but it can be changed by the will of the people following established forms and in cases for which provisions have been made.

So in America, the constitution can vary; but as long as it exists, it is the source of all powers. Predominant force resides in it alone.

It is easy to see how these differences must influence the position and rights of the judicial body in the three countries that I have cited.

If, in France, the courts could disobey the laws on the grounds that they found them unconstitutional, the constituent power would actually be in their hands, since they alone would have the right to interpret a constitution whose terms no one could change. They would therefore take the place of the nation and would dominate society, at least in so far as the inherent weakness of the judicial power would allow them to do so.[f]

f. If the French judge had the right to disregard the laws on the grounds that they are unconstitutional, not only would he usurp the constituent power, but also he would escape from all constraint, for in France the courts are answerable only to themselves. Political jurisdiction is introduced only against the principal organs of the government. Therefore the judge, while becoming a political power, would continue to be answerable only to a judicial power, which implies an obvious confusion in all ideas.

In America the judge interprets the constitution, but his opinion is not necessarily followed; he takes a place naturally among the principal political powers, but he answers for his actions to a central political court. He cannot shield either his actions [v. opinions] or his person from the control of society.

In the United States political jurisdiction is a weapon always hanging over the head of the magistrate, a weapon all the more formidable because by his position the judge is the habitual censor of those who are called to deliver his decision.

So the high prerogatives granted to American magistrates never put them beyond

I know that by denying judges the right to declare laws unconstitutional, we indirectly give the legislative body the power to change the constitution, since it no longer encounters a legal barrier that stops it. But better to grant the power to change the constitution of the people to men who imperfectly represent the will of the people, than to others who represent only themselves.

It would be still more unreasonable to give English judges the right to resist the will of the legislative body, because Parliament, which makes the law, makes the constitution as well, and because, as a result, a law cannot

the reach of the majority; and their independence is not such that there is not always a single dominant power in society before which all must definitively submit. Judicial power slows the people; it cannot stop them.

When you examine the constitution of the different powers that govern society, you easily discover that the weakest of all is the judiciary when it finds itself abandoned solely to it own resources.[1] The legislature relies on the moral force that belongs to the whole nation; the executive power has its right to initiate and the physical strength of its agents; but the magistracy represents only the authority of reason. The judicial power only becomes formidable when united with another power. There is no more powerful agent of tyranny in the world than the body of magistrates when it joins its action with that of a despot. Because it then delivers to him the only thing that force alone cannot create: the support of the law [in the margin, with a bracket: a commonplace]. Then human liberty does not know where to flee and comes to expire at the very door of the temple of laws. In America the magistrate cannot seek the principle of power outside of himself. The executive power would willingly come to his aid; but it [is (ed.)] without influence. The people would be able to offer him more real help, but the people often see him only as an inconvenient censor. The American judge is therefore isolated among the crowd. To the passions that swirl around him, to the impetus of public opinion, he can only oppose his word; he commands only as long as they want to obey.

It must be remarked, moreover, that in the United States the judge could only get involved in politics through the unconstitutionality of laws. When the people act within the circle drawn by the constitution, whatever the nature of their acts, the judge is reduced to silence. Actually the American magistrates do not have the right to constrain the will of the people; they can only force the people not to be unfaithful to their will and not to fall into self-contradiction.

If, against the view of the majority and after public opinion has had the time to come to a decision, the magistrate persists in his refusal, the people can always change or clarify the terms of the constitution. And immediately resistance ceases along with the motive or the pretext that gave it birth.

1. Don't I previously say the opposite? (YTC, CVh, 5, pp. 16–19).

in any case be called unconstitutional when it issues from the three powers.

Neither of these two arguments applies to America.

In the United States, the constitution dominates the legislators as well as ordinary citizens. It is, therefore, the highest law and cannot be modified by a law. So it is right that the courts obey the constitution in preference to all laws [and by doing so, they do not make themselves masters of society since the people, by changing the constitution, can always reduce the judges to obedience. So American judges refuse without hesitation to apply laws that seem to them contrary to the constitution]. This follows from the very essence of the judicial power: to choose from among legal provisions those that bind him most strictly is in a way the natural right of the magistrate.

In France, as well, the constitution is the highest law, and judges have an equal right to base their decisions on it. But by exercising this right, they would not be able to avoid encroaching upon another right still more sacred than theirs: that of the society in whose name they act. Here ordinary reason must yield to reason of state.[g]

In America, where the nation can always reduce magistrates to obedience by changing its constitution, a similar danger is not to be feared. On this point, therefore, politics and logic are in agreement, and the people as well as the judges equally retain their privileges.

When a law that the judge considers contrary to the constitution is invoked before the courts of the United States, he can refuse to apply it. This power is the only one particular to the American magistrate, but a great political influence follows from it.

There are, in fact, very few laws that can by nature escape judicial analysis for long, for there are very few of them that do not harm an individual interest, and that litigants cannot or must not cite before the courts.

Now, from the day when the judge refuses to apply a law in a trial, it

g. "In France {during the Restoration}, we have often seen the executive power seek to reduce judicial authority, while the democratic party sought with all its efforts to raise it up. It seems to me that on both sides they acted against themselves" (YTC, CVh, 5, pp. 26–27).

instantly loses part of its moral force. Those who have been wronged by the law are then alerted that a way exists to escape the obligation to obey it; trials multiply, and it becomes powerless. Then one of these two things happens: the people change the constitution or the legislature revokes its law.

So the Americans have given their courts an immense political power; but by forcing them to challenge laws only by judicial means, they have greatly diminished the dangers of this power.

If the judge had been able to challenge laws in a theoretical and general fashion; if he had been able to take the initiative and censure the legislator, he would have burst upon the political scene. Having become the champion or the adversary of one party, he would have called upon all the passions that divide the country to join in the struggle. But when the judge challenges a law in an obscure debate and on a particular application, he partially conceals the importance of the challenge from the eyes of the public. His decision intends only to strike an individual interest; the law is harmed only by chance.

The law censured in this way, moreover, is not destroyed; its moral force is lessened, but its material effect is not suspended. Only little by little, and under the repeated blows of jurisprudence, does it finally succumb. [{If the law were challenged directly it would triumph or succumb in a day.}]

Furthermore, it is easily understood that by charging individual interest with provoking the censure of laws, by intimately linking the trial of the law to the trial of a man, you assure that legislation will not be lightly challenged. In this system legislation is no longer exposed to the daily aggression of parties. By pointing out the mistakes of the legislator, you obey a real need; you start with a definite and appreciable fact, since it must serve as the basis for a trial.

I do not know whether the way in which the American courts act, at the same time that it is most favorable to public order, is not most favorable to liberty as well.

If the judge could challenge the legislators only head on, there are times when he would be afraid to do so; there are other times when partisan spirit would push him daily to dare to do so. Thus the laws would be challenged when the power from which they came was weak, and you would submit

to them in silence when that power was strong. That is to say that the laws would often be challenged when respect for them would be most useful, and would be respected when oppression in their name would become easy.[h]

But the American judge is led onto political terrain despite himself. He judges the law only because he has a trial to judge and cannot avoid judging the trial. The political question that he must resolve is linked with the interest of the litigants, and he cannot refuse to settle it without committing a denial of justice. By fulfilling the strict duties imposed on the profession of magistrate, he performs the act of a citizen. It is true that judicial censure, exercised by the courts on legislation, cannot be extended in this way to all laws without distinction, for there are some that can never give rise to this kind of clearly formulated dispute that is called a trial. And when such a dispute is possible, it is still conceivable that there will be no one who wants to submit it to the courts.

The Americans have often felt this drawback, but they have left the remedy incomplete for fear of making it dangerously effective in all cases.

Enclosed within its limits, the power granted to the American courts to rule on the unconstitutionality of laws still forms one of the most powerful barriers that has ever been raised against the tyranny of political assemblies.[j]

h. Note: "≠This is what happened particularly at the time of the constitution of the year VIII. The senate was established as overseer of the other powers, and it had to denounce to the legislative bodies attacks against the constitution. We know that it refrained from doing so on any occasion. Under Napoleon's son, this very senate could perhaps have hindered the legal course of government.≠"

j. "≠The absence of administrative centralization is more a fortunate circumstance than the result of the wisdom of the law-maker. But the judicial power in the United States is a barrier raised by design against the omnipotence of the majority. It can be considered as the only powerful or real obstacle that the American laws have placed before the steps of the people≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 16–17).

"Judicial power in general./

"Utility of the judicial power to oppose the encroachments of popular power. See Kent, vol. 1, p. 275" (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 41).

Other Powers Granted to American Judges

In the United States, all citizens have the right to accuse public officials before ordinary courts.—How they exercise this right.—Art. 75 of the French constitution of the year VIII.—The Americans and the English cannot understand the sense of this article.

I do not know if I need to say that among a free people, like the Americans, all citizens have the right to accuse public officials before ordinary judges, and that all judges have the right to condemn public officials, it is so natural a thing.

To allow the courts to punish agents of the executive power when they violate the law is not giving the courts a particular privilege. To forbid them to do so is taking away a natural right.

It did not appear to me that in the United States, by making all officials responsible to the courts, the forces of government had been weakened.

It seemed to me, on the contrary, that the Americans, by acting in this way, had increased the respect that is owed to those who govern, the latter being much more careful to avoid criticism.

Nor did I observe in the United States that many political trials were instituted, and it is easily explained. A trial is always, whatever its nature, a difficult and costly enterprise. It is easy to accuse a public man in the newspapers, but it is not without grave motives that someone decides to bring him before the law. So to bring legal proceedings against an official, it is necessary to have just grounds of complaint; and officials hardly provide such grounds when they fear having proceedings brought.

This does not result from the republican form that the Americans have adopted, for the same experience can occur every day in England.

These two peoples did not believe that their independence had been assured by allowing the principal agents of power to be put on trial. Instead, they thought that they succeeded in guaranteeing liberty, much more by small trials, placed daily within the reach of the least citizen, than by great proceedings that were never used or were used too late.

In the Middle Ages, when it was very difficult to reach criminals, judges, when they got hold of some of them, often inflicted terrible punishments on these unfortunates; this did not reduce the number of those guilty. Since then, we have discovered that by making justice both more certain and milder, we have made it more effective at the same time.

The Americans and the English think that arbitrariness and tyranny must be treated like theft: make it easier to take legal action and make the penalty more mild.

In the year VIII of the French Republic, a constitution appeared whose article 75 was worded thus: "The agents of the government, other than the ministers, cannot have legal proceedings instituted against them for facts relating to their functions, except by virtue of a decision of the *Conseil d'État;* in this case, the proceedings take place before the ordinary courts."

The constitution of the year VIII passed from the scene, but not this article, which remained after it [{and we are still so inexperienced in the art of [being (ed.)] free.}]; and it is still used every day to oppose the just complaints of citizens.

[{But this is particular to France.}]

I have often tried to explain the sense of this art. 75 to some Americans or Englishmen, and it has always been very difficult for me to succeed in doing so.

What they noticed first was that the *Conseil d'État,* in France, was a high court seated at the center of the kingdom; there was a kind of tyranny in sending all complainants before it as a preliminary step.

But when I tried to make them understand that the *Conseil d'État* was not a judicial body at all, in the ordinary sense of the term, but an administrative body, whose members were dependent on the King; and that the King, as sovereign, after ordering one of his servants, called prefect, to commit a wrongful act, could order, as sovereign, another of his servants, called councilor of the *Conseil d'État,* to prevent someone from having the first punished; when I showed them the citizen harmed by the order of the prince, reduced to asking the prince himself for the authorization to seek justice, they refused to believe in such enormities and accused me of lying and of ignorance.

Often, in the old monarchy, the *parlement* ordered the arrest of the public official who made himself guilty of a crime. Sometimes the royal au-

thority, intervening, had the procedure annulled. Despotism then showed itself openly, and people, while obeying, submitted only to force.

So we have retreated far from the point reached by our fathers; for we allow, under the color of justice, and consecrate, in the name of law, deeds that violence alone imposed on them.

CHAPTER 7

Of Political Jurisdiction in the United States[TN 4]

What the author understands by political jurisdiction.—How political jurisdiction is understood in France, England and the United States.—In America, the political judge concerns himself only with public officials.—He orders dismissals rather than punishments.—Political jurisdiction, customary method of government.—Political jurisdiction, as understood in the United States, is, despite its mildness, and perhaps because of it, a very powerful weapon in the hands of the majority.

[≠Political jurisdiction is a violation of the great principle of the separation of powers; you resort to it as an extreme measure to reach certain guilty individuals.≠]

I understand by political jurisdiction the decision delivered by a political body temporarily vested with the right to judge.

In absolute governments, it is useless to give judgments extraordinary forms. The prince, in whose name the accused is prosecuted, is master of the courts as of everything else, and he has no need to seek a guarantee beyond the idea that is held of his power.[a] The only fear that he can imagine

Translator's Note 4: For this chapter, there is no totally satisfactory way to translate *jugement politique.* The most direct translation, *political judgment,* is extremely ambiguous. For want of a better alternative, I have decided to use the traditional translation, *political jurisdiction,* since the chapter has to do with the right of a political body, in particular circumstances, to bring to trial, to judge and to punish a public figure.

a. In the margin:

It was necessary to give the superior political power control of all powers for the *unity* of government, and for that it was necessary to give the legislature the entirely administrative power to *dismiss* or the entirely judicial power to *judge.*

is that not even the external appearances of justice are kept, and that his authority is dishonored in the desire to assert it.

But in most free countries, where the majority can never act on the courts as an absolute prince would, judicial power is sometimes placed temporarily in the hands of the very representatives of society. Temporarily mixing powers in this way is preferred to violating the necessary principle of the unity of government. England, France and the United States have introduced political jurisdiction into their laws; it is curious to examine how these three great peoples have turned it to good account.

In England and in France, the chamber of peers forms the highest criminal court[1] of the nation. It does not judge all political crimes, but it can do so.

Alongside the chamber of peers is another political power, vested with the right to accuse. On this point, the only difference that exists between the two countries is this: in England, the members of the House of Commons can accuse whomever they choose before the Lords; while in France the deputies can only prosecute the ministers of the King in this way.[b]

In these two countries, moreover, the chamber of peers finds all the penal laws at its disposal for striking the delinquents.

In the United States, as in Europe, one of the two branches of the legislature is vested with the right to accuse, and the other with the right to judge. The representatives denounce the guilty party; the Senate punishes him.

But a matter can be *referred* to the Senate only by the *representatives;* and before the Senate, the representatives can accuse only *public officials.* Therefore the Senate has a more limited competence than the French court of

On the other hand, it was very dangerous to liberty and humanity to vest a political power with the most formidable rights of a judicial body.

From that the mixed American system. Political jurisdiction more than dismissal, less than a ruling.

1. *The court of Lords in England furthermore forms the last appeal in certain civil matters. See Blackstone, book III, chap. IV.*

b. In the margin: "I find nothing in Blackstone that justifies this distinction. However I think it is correct."

the peers, and the representatives have a broader right to accuse than our deputies.

But here is the greatest difference that exists between America and Europe. In Europe, political courts can apply all the provisions of the penal code. In America, when they have removed from the guilty party the public character with which he was vested, and have declared him unworthy to hold any political offices whatsoever in the future, their right is exhausted, and the task of the ordinary courts begins.

I suppose that the President of the United States has committed a crime of high treason.

The House of Representatives accuses him; the senators decide his removal. Afterward he appears before a jury that alone can take away life or liberty.

This succeeds in throwing a bright light on the subject that occupies us.

By introducing political jurisdiction into their laws, Europeans wanted to reach great criminals whatever their birth, rank or power in the State. To achieve that, they temporarily united, within a great political body, all the prerogatives of the courts.

The legislator is then transformed into a magistrate; he can establish the crime, classify and punish it. By giving him the rights of the judge, the law imposed all of the judge's obligations on him, and bound him to the observation of all the forms of justice.

When a political court, French or English, has a public official as a defendant and delivers a verdict condemning him, by doing so, it removes him from office and can declare him unworthy to hold any office in the future. But here the dismissal and political interdiction are a consequence of the decision and not the decision itself.

So in Europe, political jurisdiction is more a judicial act than an administrative measure.

The opposite is seen in the United States, and it is easy to be persuaded that political jurisdiction there is more an administrative measure than a judicial act.

It is true that the decision of the Senate is judicial in form; to make it, the senators are obliged to conform to the solemnity and customs of the procedure. It is also judicial by the grounds on which it is based; the Senate

is, in general, obliged to base its decision on a crime of the common law. But it is administrative in its objective.

If the principal aim of the American law-maker had really been to arm a political body with a great judicial power, he would not have restricted its action to the circle of public officials, for the most dangerous enemies of the State may hold no office at all. This is true above all in republics, where the favor of parties is the first of powers, and where someone is often much stronger when not legally exercising any power.

If the American law-maker had wanted to give society itself, like judges, the right to prevent great crimes by fear of punishment, he would have put at the disposal of the political courts all the resources of the penal code. But he only provided them with an incomplete weapon that cannot reach the most dangerous of criminals. For what use is a judgment of political interdiction against someone who wants to overturn the laws themselves?

The principal aim of political jurisdiction in the United States is, therefore, to withdraw power from someone who is making poor use of it, and to prevent the same citizen from being vested with power in the future. That, as we see, is an administrative act that has been given the solemnity of a judgment.

So in this matter, the Americans have created something mixed. They have given all the guarantees of political jurisdiction to administrative dismissal, and they have removed from political jurisdiction its greatest rigors.

This point settled, everything closely follows; we then discover why the American constitutions submit all civil officials to the jurisdiction of the Senate, and exempt the military whose crimes are, however, more to be feared [{in republics}]. In the civil order, the Americans have, so to speak, no removable officials; some are irremovable; others hold their rights by a mandate that cannot be abrogated. So to remove them from power, they must all be judged.[c] But military officers depend on the head

c. To the side: "≠Action of the two systems.
"French system more effective, more dangerous.
"American system more *just,* more rational in the *separation* of power. Less effective in times of crisis, more everyday.≠"

of State, who himself is a civil officer. By reaching the head of State, they strike them all with the same blow.[2]

Now, if we come to compare the European and American systems in the effects that each produces or can produce, we discover differences no less noticeable.

In France and in England, political jurisdiction is considered as an extraordinary weapon that society should use only to save itself in moments of great peril.

We cannot deny that political jurisdiction, as understood in Europe, violates the conservative principle of the separation of powers and constantly threatens the life and liberty of men.

Political jurisdiction in the United States strikes only an indirect blow at the principle of separation of powers. It does not threaten the existence of citizens; it does not, as in Europe, hang over all heads, since it strikes only those who, by accepting public offices, subject themselves to its rigors in advance.

It is simultaneously less to be feared and less effective.

Moreover, the law-makers of the United States did not consider it as an extreme remedy for the great ills of society, but as a customary means of government.

From this point of view, it perhaps exercises more real influence over the social body in America than in Europe. You must not in fact be fooled by the apparent mildness of the American legislation regarding political jurisdiction. It must be noted, in the first place, that in the United States the court that delivers these judgments is composed of the same elements and is subject to the same influences as the body charged with accusing; this gives an almost irresistible impulse to the vindictive passions of parties. If political judges, in the United States, cannot order punishments as severe as those ordered by political judges in Europe, there is less chance of being acquitted by them as a result. Conviction is less to be feared and more certain.

Europeans, by establishing political courts, had as their principal object

2. *Not that his rank can be taken from an officer, but he can be removed from his command.*

to *punish* the guilty; Americans, to *remove* them from power. Political jurisdiction in the United States is a preventive measure in a way. So judges there must not be bound by very exact criminal definitions.

Nothing is more frightening than the vagueness of American laws, when they define political crimes strictly speaking. The crimes that will justify the conviction of the President, says the Constitution of the United States, section IV, art. I [*sic:* Article II, Section 4], are "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." Most of the state constitutions are even more obscure.

"Public officials, says the constitution of Massachusetts,[d] will be condemned for their culpable behavior and for their bad administration.[3] All officials who put the State in danger by bad administration, corruption or other misdemeanors, says the constitution of Virginia, are impeachable by the House of Delegates." There are constitutions that, in order to let an unlimited responsibility weigh upon the public officials, specify no crime.[4]

But what makes the American laws in this matter so formidable arises, I dare say, from their very mildness.

We have seen that in Europe the dismissal of an official, and his political interdiction, were consequences of the penalty, and that in America it was the penalty itself. The result is this. In Europe, the political courts are vested with terrible rights that sometimes they do not know how to use; and it happens that they do not punish for fear of punishing too much. But in America, they do not back away from a penalty that humanity does not bemoan. To condemn a political enemy to death, in order to remove him from power, is in everybody's eyes a horrible assassination. To declare an adversary unworthy to possess this same power and to take it away from him, while leaving him his life and liberty, can appear as the honest outcome of the struggle.

d. The Massachusetts Constitution reads: "The senate shall be a court with full authority to hear and determine all impeachments made by the house of representatives, against any officer or officers of the commonwealth, for misconduct and mal-administration in their offices."

3. *Chap. 1, sect. II, § 8.*

4. *See the constitutions of Illinois, Maine, Connecticut and Georgia.*

Now, this judgment, so easy to decide, is nonetheless the height of misfortune for the ordinary man among those to whom it is applied. Great criminals will undoubtedly defy its empty rigors; ordinary men will see in it a decision that destroys their position, stains their honor, and that condemns them to a shameful inaction worse than death.

So the less formidable political jurisdiction in the United States seems, the greater the influence it exercises on the course of society. It does not act directly on the governed, but it makes the majority entirely master of those who govern. It does not give the legislature an immense power that could be exercised only in a day of crisis; it allows the legislature to have a moderate and regular power that can be used every day. If the power is less, on the other hand, its use is more convenient and its abuse easier.

By preventing political courts from ordering judicial punishments, the Americans seem to me therefore to have avoided the most horrible consequences of legislative tyranny, rather than tyranny itself. And all things considered, I do not know if political jurisdiction, as it is understood in the United States, is not the most formidable weapon ever put in the hands of the majority.

When the American republics begin to degenerate, I believe that it will be easy to recognize; it will be enough to see if the number of cases of political jurisdiction increases.[N]

CHAPTER 8

Of the Federal Constitution

Until now I have considered each state as forming a complete whole, and I have shown the different mechanisms that the people put in motion there, as well as the means of action that they use. But all these states that I have envisaged as independent are, in certain cases, forced to obey a supreme authority, which is that of the Union. The time has come to examine the portion of sovereignty that has been conceded to the Union, and to cast a rapid glance over the federal constitution.[1]

Historical Background of the Federal Constitution[a]

Origin of the first Union.—Its weakness.—Congress summons the constituent power.—Interval of two years that

1. *See the text of the federal Constitution.* [In Appendix in the first editions (ed.)]

a. In the margin: "≠Where to find the *outline* of the first federation?
"Bad result of the first federation. See *Federalist,* p. 60 [No. 15 (ed.)].≠"

The *Federalist* is, without any doubt, the work that Tocqueville cites most often. Its decisive influence on the drafting of this chapter must be recognized, even if such an influence on the whole book is difficult to define and remains to be determined. When Tocqueville reads the *Federalist,* he certainly has in mind, and at hand, Montesquieu and Rousseau. He rediscovers many of their ideas in the American work. An initial examination of the citations taken from the work seems to indicate that, above all, Tocqueville found in it a confirmation of his own ideas. This does not mean, as has often been asserted, that he intentionally omitted citations of the text in other chapters. If undeniable similarities exist between the American text and the *Democracy,* they demonstrate the result of a shared origin of ideas between the two texts more than a direct influence of the first book on the second. Another important work concerning information on the political organization of the United States is the commentaries on the Constitution by Justice Joseph Story. In a letter to Francis Lieber of May 9, 1840, Story, apparently

passes between this moment and that when the new Constitution is promulgated.

[≠I am not among those who profess a blind faith in legal prescriptions and who think that it is sufficient to change the laws of a people in order to modify easily their social and political state. Laws act only in two ways, either by their long duration, when a power superior to society manages to impose them over many years, or by their perfect harmony with the mores, habits and civilization of the people. In this last case, the laws are only the conspicuous and legal manifestation of a preexistent fact.[b]

But I admit that when laws are found to be in harmony with the needs {the social state} of a country, its mores and its habits, their effect is often something of a miracle.

unable to recognize the significance of the *Democracy,* judges that Lieber's knowledge of the American political system is much superior to that of Tocqueville; according to Story, Tocqueville simply took his ideas from the *Federalist* and from Story's own book on the American Constitution (*Life and Letters of Joseph Story,* Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1851, vol. II, p. 330). John W. Henry Canoll ("The Authorship of Democracy in America," *Historical Magazine* 8, no. 9 (1864): 332–33), who reports the words of Mgr. Alexander Vattemare, asserts that the American author who had a direct influence on Tocqueville's thought is John C. Spencer. According to Canoll, Tocqueville would have shown Spencer a plan of his work; the latter would have reviewed and criticized it and, after numerous interviews, would have given the canvas of the *Democracy* to the author.

b. In the margin:

≠The government of the United States is not truly speaking a *federal* government, it is a *national* government whose powers are limited. *Important.*/

Mixture of *national* and *federal* in the constitution. See *Federalist,* p. 166 [No. 28 (ed.)]./

The Union enters most profoundly into the government of the United States by the right to invalidate laws that are contrary to vested rights. Note that it is the federal *judicial* power alone that acts in this case./

[To the side: I am not among those who believe that there is a force in the laws that commands obedience to such an extent that all the present and all the future of a people depend on its legislation./

You could deal with the principles of *union,* from complete independence, *league, confederation,* to finally *national* government.≠]

No country on earth more than America has ever given a greater example of the power of laws on the life of political society.≠]

The thirteen colonies that simultaneously threw off the yoke of England at the end of the last century had, as I have already said, the same religion, the same language, the same mores, nearly the same laws; they struggled against a common enemy. So they must have had strong reasons to unite closely together, and to be absorbed into one and the same nation.

But each of them, having always had a separate existence and a government close at hand, had created particular interests as well as customs; and each found repugnant a solid and complete union that would have made its individual importance disappear within a common importance. From that, two opposing tendencies: one that led the Anglo-Americans to unite; the other that led them to separate.

As long as the war with the mother country lasted, necessity made the principle of union prevail. And, although the laws that constituted the union were defective, the common bond continued to exist in spite of them.[2]

But as soon as peace was concluded, the vices of the legislation[c] became clear; the State seemed to dissolve all at once. Each colony, having become an independent republic, seized full sovereignty. The federal government, condemned by its very constitution to weakness, and no longer supported by the feeling of public danger, saw its flag abandoned to the outrages of the great peoples of Europe. At the same time, it could not find sufficient resources to stand up to the Indian nations and to pay the interest on debts contracted during the war for independence. About to perish, it officially declared its own impotence and summoned the constituent power.[3]

2. *See the articles of the first confederation formed in 1778. This federal constitution was adopted by all the States only in 1781.*

Also see the analysis that the Federalist *makes of this constitution, from No. 15 to No. 22 inclusive, and Mr. Story in his* Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States, *pp. 85 [84 (ed.)]–115.*

c. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not know if you shouldn't say: *of the constitution"* (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 9–10).

3. *Congress made this declaration on February 21, 1787.*

If ever America was capable of rising for a few moments to the high level of glory that the proud imagination[d] of its inhabitants would like constantly to show us, it was at this supreme moment when the national power had, in a way, just abdicated authority.

For a people to struggle energetically to conquer its independence is a spectacle that every century has been able to provide. The efforts made by the Americans to escape from the yoke of the English have, moreover, been much exaggerated. Separated from their enemies by 1,300 leagues of ocean, aided by a powerful ally, the United States owed their victory to their position much more than to the merit of their armies or to the patriotism of their citizens.[e] Who would dare to compare the American war to the wars of the French Revolution, and the efforts of the Americans to ours? France, the object of attacks from the whole of Europe, without money, credit, allies, threw one-twentieth of its population before its enemies, with one hand putting out the conflagration that devoured its bowels and with the other carrying the torch abroad.[f] But what is new in the history of societies is to see a great people, warned by its legislators that the gears of government are grinding to a halt, turn its attention to itself, without rushing and without fear; sound the depth of the trouble; keep self-control for two whole years, in order to take time to find the remedy; and, when this remedy is indicated, voluntarily submit to it without costing humanity either a tear or a drop of blood.

When the insufficiency of the first federal constitution made itself felt, the excitement of the political passions that had given birth to the revolution was partially calmed, and all the great men that it had created still lived. This was double good fortune for America. The small as-

d. The manuscript says: ". . . that the vain imagination . . ."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "I would cross out the word *vain* in order not to shock the Americans among whom the book should have a great deal of success" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 10).

e. In the margin: "≠If you want to know what a people can do for its independence, it is not America that you must look at.≠"

f. Hervé de Tocqueville: "If you keep this paragraph, you must suppress this last sentence which is declamatory, vague and could be interpreted as praise for violence in the manner of Thiers" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 10).

sembly,[4] which charged itself with drafting the second constitution, included the best minds and most noble characters that had ever appeared in the New World. George Washington presided over it.[h]

This national commission, after long and mature deliberations, finally offered to the people for adoption the body of organic laws that still governs the Union today. All the states successively adopted it.[5] The new federal government began to operate in 1789, after two years of interregnum. So the American Revolution finished precisely at the moment when ours began.

4. *It was composed of only 55*[g] *members. Washington, Madison, Hamilton, the two Morrises were part of it.*

g. The manuscript says 39, which indicates the number of delegates to the convention approving the proposed constitution on September 17, 1787.

h. Great men of the early times of the republic./

Their enlightenment. Their true patriotism. Their high character. Convention that made the federal Constitution. Few prejudices that were met there; constant struggle against provincial prejudices. Sincere love of republican liberty, but courageous and constant struggle against the bad passions of the people.

Character of Washington. Still more admirable for his courage in struggling against popular passions than for what he did for liberty. The gods are disappearing!

A separate chapter on Washington. Washington has been admired for not having wanted to become a dictator, for having returned to the crowd. . . . Ignorance about the true state of things; historical memories badly applied.

Cincinnatus. Washington could not reasonably think to dominate. But *admirable* in his resistance to the exaggerations of popular opinion; there is his superiority; there is the culminating point.

Washington could not rise by arms (absurd), but by popular favor. And he did not seek it out for a moment.

Why did Washington, who in the end during his lifetime lost the majority, become more than a man after his death? (YTC, CVe, pp. 61–62).

In a bundle of notes where Tocqueville had gathered information for new chapters, the following title is found: Of the Great Men of America and of Washington in Particular (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 1).

5. *It was not the legislators who adopted it. The people named deputies for this express purpose. In each of these assemblies the new Constitution was the object of thorough discussion.*

Summary Picture of the Federal Constitution[j]

Division of powers between federal sovereignty and that of the states.—The government of the states remains the normal law;—the federal government, the exception.

A first difficulty must have presented itself to the minds of the Americans. It was a question of sharing sovereignty in such a way that the different states that formed the Union continued to govern themselves in everything that related only to their internal prosperity, and that the whole nation, represented by the Union, did not cease to be a body and to provide for all its general needs. A complex question, difficult to resolve.[k]

It was impossible to set in advance, in an exact and complete manner, the portion of power that had to revert to each of these two governments that were going to share sovereignty.

Who would be able to anticipate in advance all the details of the life of a people?

The duties and rights of the federal government were simple and easy enough to define, because the Union had been formed for the purpose of meeting a number of great general needs. The duties and rights of the government of the states were, on the contrary, numerous and complicated, because this government penetrated into all the details of social life.

So the attributions of the federal government were defined with great care,[m] and everything that was not included in the definition was declared to be part of the attributions of the government of the states. Thus, the

j. Union./

The Union has an artificial sovereignty; the states, a natural sovereignty; cause of difference in real strength (perhaps subtle)./

Power of the Union in what concerns it: The Union has more extensive and more essential prerogatives, in what concerns it, than a number of States forming only a single body have had (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 51).

k. In the margin: "I believe that the principle of the unity of the American people regarding the matters provided for in the Constitution—principle rich in consequences and which you come back to constantly—must be placed at the beginning of this part (I do not know where)."

m. ≠Here there was a principle that was supposed to dominate the whole matter:

government of the states remained the normal law; the federal government was the exception.[6]

But it was anticipated that, in practice, questions could arise relative to the exact limits of this exceptional government, and that it would be dangerous to abandon the solution of these questions to the ordinary courts established in the different states, by the states themselves. So a high federal court,[7] a single tribunal, was created; one of its attributions was to maintain the division of powers between the two rival governments as the Constitution had established it.[8]

The Union has only a circumscribed sovereignty, but within this circle it forms only one and the same people.[1]

(You could define the Union as a people who does not enjoy all the rights of sovereignty.) Within this circle the Union is sovereign. This set forth and accepted, the rest is easy; for from the origin of societies, this point is agreed: that a people has the right to have all that involves its security and independence judged by its own courts.

Now, since the Union, for the particular matters indicated by the Constitution, forms only one people, the above rule was as applicable to it as to all others.

Nothing more was involved than determining what its interests were within the circle of its existence, traced by the Constitution.

1. Some restriction has indeed been put on these principles by introducing the states as independent powers in the Senate and by making them vote separately in the House of Representatives in the case of election of the President. But these are exceptions. The opposite principle predominates≠ (YTC, CVb, p. 20).

6. *See amendments to the federal Constitution.* Federalist, *No. 32. Story [* Commentaries *(ed.)], p. 711. Kent's* Commentaries, *vol. I, p. 364.*

Note indeed that, whenever the Constitution has not reserved to Congress the exclusive right to regulate certain matters, the states can do so, while waiting for Congress to choose to take charge of them. Example: Congress has the right to pass a general bankruptcy law; it doesn't do so; each state could pass one in its own way. This point was established, moreover, only after discussion before the courts. It is only jurisprudence.

7. *The action of this court is indirect, as we will see later.*

8. *This is how the* Federalist, *in No. 45 [p. 200], explains this division of sovereignty between the Union and the particular states:*

> *The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the state governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce. [. . . (ed.) . . .] The powers reserved to the several states will*

Attributions of the Federal Government

Power granted to the federal government to make peace, war, to establish general taxes.—Matter of internal political policy with which it can be involved.—The government of the Union, more centralized on some points than was the royal government under the old French monarchy.

Peoples in relation to one another are only individuals. Above all, a nation needs a single government to appear with advantage in regard to foreigners.

So the Union was granted the exclusive right to make war and peace; to conclude treaties of commerce; to raise armies, to equip fleets.[9]

The necessity of a national government does not make itself as strongly felt in the direction of the internal affairs of society.

Nonetheless, there are certain general interests for which only a general authority can usefully provide.

The Union was left the right to regulate all that relates to the value of money; it was charged with the postal service; it was given the right to open

extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the state.

I will often have the occasion to cite the Federalist *in this work. When the proposal that has since become the Constitution of the United States was still before the people, and submitted for adoption, three men who were already celebrated and have since become even more famous, John Jay, Hamilton and Madison, joined together for the purpose of making the advantages of the proposal clear to the nation. With this idea, they published, in the form of a newspaper, a series of articles that together form a treatise. They gave the newspaper the name* Federalist, *which has remained the title of the work.*

The Federalist[n] *is a fine book that, though particular to America, should be familiar to the statesmen of all countries.*

n. James T. Schleifer has identified the English edition used by Tocqueville. It was the one published in Washington by Thomson & Homans, in 1831. In his notes, Tocqueville also cites a French edition of 1792 (probably that of Buisson, Paris).

9. *See Constitution, sect. VIII.* Federalist, *Nos. 41 and 42. Kent's* Commentaries, *vol. I, p. 207 and following. Story [*Commentaries *(ed.)], pp. 358–82;* id., *pp. 409–26.*

the great avenues of communication that had to unite the various parts of the territory.[10]

The government of the different states was generally considered free in its sphere, but it could abuse this independence and compromise the security of the entire Union through imprudent measures. For these rare cases, defined in advance, the federal government was permitted to intervene in the internal affairs of the states.[11] That explains how, while still recognizing in each of the confederated republics the power to modify and change its legislation, each was, nevertheless, forbidden to make retroactive laws and to create bodies of noblemen within its midst.[12]

Finally, since the federal government had to be able to fulfill the obligations imposed on it, it was given the unlimited right to levy taxes.[13]

When you pay attention to the division of powers as the federal constitution has established it; when, on the one hand, you examine the portion of sovereignty that the particular states have reserved to themselves and, on the other, the share of power that the Union took, it is easily discovered that the federal law-makers had formed very clear and very sound ideas about what I earlier called governmental centralization.[o]

The United States forms not only a republic, but also a confederation.[p] But the national authority there is, in several respects, more centralized than it was in the same period under several of the absolute monarchies of Europe. I will cite only two examples.

10. *There are also several other rights of this type, such as that to pass a general law on bankruptcy, to grant patents. . . . What made the intervention of the whole Union necessary in these matters is felt well enough.*

11. *Even in this case, its intervention is indirect. The Union intervenes through its courts, as we will see further on.*

12. *Federal Constitution, sect. X, art. 1.*

13. *Constitution, sect. VIII, IX and X.* Federalist, *Nos. 30–36, inclusive.* Id., *41, 42, 43, 44. Kent's* Commentaries, *vol. I, pp. 207 and 381. Story,* id., *pp. 329–514.*

o. In a variant of the manuscript: "≠You can even say that the necessity of governmental centralization was better understood by them than it was in several of the monarchies of Europe.≠"

p. Throughout the book, Tocqueville uses the words *federation* and *confederation* with not much precision.

France counted thirteen sovereign courts that, most often, had the right to interpret the law without appeal. It possessed, in addition, certain provinces called *pays d'États* that could refuse their support, after the sovereign authority, charged with representing the nation, had ordered the raising of a tax.

The Union has only a single court to interpret the law, as well as a single legislature to make the law; a tax voted by the representatives of the nation obligates all the citizens. So the Union is more centralized on these two essential points than the French monarchy was; the Union, however, is only a collection of confederated republics.

In Spain, certain provinces[q] had the power to establish their own customs system, a power that, by its very essence, stems from national sovereignty.

In America, Congress alone has the right to regulate commerce among the states. So the government of the confederation is more centralized on this point than that of the kingdom of Spain.

It is true that, in the end, you arrived at the same point, since in France and in Spain the royal power is always able to execute, by force if necessary, what the constitution of the kingdom denied it the right to do. But I am talking here about theory.

Federal Powers

After having enclosed the federal government within a clearly drawn circle of action, it was a matter of knowing how to make it work.

q. In the manuscript: "each province."

Legislative Powers[r]

[DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SENATE AND THAT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES]

Division of the legislative body into two branches.—Differences in the way the two houses are formed.—The principle of the independence of the state triumphs in the formation of the Senate.—The dogma of national sovereignty, in the composition of the House of Representatives.—Singular effects that result from this, that constitutions are logical only when peoples are young.

In the organization of the powers of the Union, the plan that was traced in advance by the particular constitution of each of the states was followed on many points.

The federal legislative body of the Union was composed of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

The spirit of conciliation caused different rules to be followed in the formation of each of these assemblies.

I brought out above that, when the Americans wanted to establish the federal constitution, two opposing interests found themselves face to face. These two interests had given birth to two opinions.

Some wanted to make the Union a league of independent states, a sort of congress where the representatives of distinct peoples would come to discuss certain points of common interest.

Others wanted to unite all the inhabitants of the old colonies into one and the same people, and give them a government that, although its sphere would be limited, would be able to act within this sphere, as the one and only representative of the nation. The practical consequences of these two theories were very different.

Thus, if it was a matter of organizing a league and not a national government, it was up to the majority of the states to make laws, and not up

r. In the manuscript: "legislative power."

to the majority of the inhabitants of the Union. For each state, large or small, would then conserve its character of independent power and would enter into the Union on a perfectly equal footing.

On the contrary, from the moment when the inhabitants of the United States were considered to form one and the same people, it was natural that only the majority of the citizens of the Union made the law.

Understandably, the small states could not consent to the application of this doctrine without completely abdicating their existence in what concerned federal sovereignty; for, from co-regulating power, they would become an insignificant fraction of a great people. The first system would have granted them an unreasonable power; the second nullified them.

In this situation, what almost always happens when interests are opposed to arguments happened: the rules of logic were made to bend. The lawmakers adopted a middle course that forced conciliation of two systems theoretically irreconcilable.

The principle of the independence of the states triumphed in the formation of the Senate;[s] the dogma of national sovereignty, in the composition of the House of Representatives.[t]

s. Senate./

The constitution of the Senate is the least *logical* and the least *rational* part of the Constitution of the United States. That is what Hamilton remarks in the *Federalist.* All of his discussion on this point shows great distress to see this system introduced, though he considers it a necessity given the state of opinion.

The equal representation of the states in the Senate goes directly against the principle of the Constitution to create a *national,* not a *federal* government.

In practice, however, I believe few disadvantages result from this anomaly. Once the majority is well and *constitutionally* established in the House of Representatives, a power *enormously popular* by its nature, the Senate is forced to go along.

You could be astonished to see the Senate charged with participating in a treaty. . . . But this power, though not expressed in all constitutions, exists in fact among all free peoples, even in monarchies.

In America, as among us, all the preliminary negotiations are done, moreover, by the executive power acting alone. It is the treaty itself that needs the support of the Senate (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 42–43).

t. "Political assemblies./

"The more numerous they are, the more prone they are to the oligarchical direction of some members. See *Federalist,* p. 235 [No. 58 (ed.)].

Each state had to send two senators to Congress and a certain number of representatives,[u] in proportion to its population.[14]

Today, as a result of this arrangement, the state of New York has forty representatives in Congress and only two senators; the state of Delaware, two senators and only one representative. So in the Senate, the state of Delaware is the equal of the state of New York, while the latter has, in the House of Representatives, forty times more influence than the first. Thus, it can happen that the minority of the nation, dominating the Senate, entirely paralyzes the desires of the majority, represented by the other chamber; this is contrary to the spirit of constitutional governments.

All this shows clearly how rare and difficult it is to link all the parts of legislation together in a logical and rational manner.

In the long run, time always gives birth to different interests and consecrates diverse rights in the same people. Then, when it is a question of establishing a general constitution, each of these interests and rights serves as so many natural obstacles that are opposed to following all of the consequences of any one political principle. So only at the birth of societies can you be perfectly logical in the laws. When you see a people enjoy this advantage, do not rush to conclude that they are wise; instead, think that they are young.

"January 30, 1832, Washington. Small number of the members of Congress" (YTC, CVe, p. 51; this note is not reproduced in *Voyage, OC,* V, 1).

u. "Ask Mr. Livingston or other Americans at the nomination of the King what the current rule of *apportionment* for the representatives is" (YTC, CVb, p. 34).

14. *Every ten years, Congress again fixes the number of deputies that each state must send to the House of Representatives. The total number was 69 [65 (ed.)] in 1789; it was 240 in 1833. (*American Almanac, *1834, p. 194 [124 (ed.)].)*

The Constitution had said that there would not be more than one representative for 30,000 inhabitants; but it did not set a lower limit. Congress has not believed that it had to increase the number of representatives in proportion to the growth of the population. By the first law that dealt with this subject, April 14, 1792 (see Laws of the United States *by Story, vol. I, p. 235), it was decided that there would be one representative for 33,000 inhabitants. The last law, which occurred in 1832, set the number at 1 representative for 48,000 inhabitants. The population represented is composed of all free men and three-fifths of the number of slaves.*

At the time when the federal Constitution was formed, only two interests positively opposed to each other existed among the Anglo-Americans: the interest of individuality for the particular states, and the interest of union for the whole people. It was necessary to come to a compromise.

You must recognize, nonetheless, that up to now this part of the Constitution has not produced the evils that could be feared.

All the states are young;[v] they are near each other; they have homogeneous mores, ideas and needs; the difference that results from their greater or lesser size is not sufficient to give them strongly opposed interests. So the small states have never been seen to join together in the Senate against the plans of the large. There is, moreover, such an irresistible force in the legal expression of the will of an entire people that, when the majority expresses itself in the organ of the House of Representatives, the Senate, facing it, finds itself quite weak.

Beyond that, it must not be forgotten that it did not depend on the American law-makers to make one and the same nation out of the people to whom they wanted to give laws. The aim of the federal Constitution was not to destroy the existence of the states, but only to restrain it. So, from the moment when a real power was left to those secondary bodies (and it could not be taken from them), the habitual use of constraint to bend them to the will of the majority was renounced in advance. This said, the introduction of the individual strengths of the states into the mechanism of the federal government was nothing extraordinary. It only took note of an existing fact, a recognized power that had to be treated gently and not violated.

v. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I would prefer *new,* for if they are young in terms of establishment, they are old in terms of civilization" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 12).

Another Difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives[w]

The Senate named by the provincial legislators.—The representatives, by the people.—Two levels of election for the first.—A single one for the second.—Length of the different mandates.—Attributions.

The Senate differs from the other chamber not only by the very principle of representation, but also by the mode of election, by the length of mandate and by the diversity of attributions.

The House of Representatives is named by the people; the Senate, by the legislators of each state.

The one is the product of direct election; the other, of indirect election.

The mandate of representatives lasts only two years; that of the senators, six.

The House of Representatives has only legislative functions; it participates in judicial power only by accusing public officials. The Senate participates in the making of laws; it judges political crimes that are referred to it by the House of Representatives; it is, in addition, the great executive council of the nation. Treaties, concluded by the President, must be validated by the Senate; his choices, to be definitive, need to receive the approval of the same body.[15]

w. In the manuscript: "OTHER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN . . ."

15. *See* Federalist, *Nos. 52–66, inclusive. Story [*Commentaries *(ed.)], pp. 199–314. Constitution, sect. II and III.*

Of Executive Power[16]

Dependence of the President.—Elective and accountable.—Free in his sphere; the Senate oversees him and does not direct him.—The salary of the President fixed at his entry into office.—Qualified veto.

The American law-makers had a difficult task to fulfill: they wanted to create an executive power that depended on the majority and yet was strong enough by itself to act freely in its sphere.[x]

The maintenance of the republican form required that the representative of the executive power be subject to the national will.

The President is an elective magistrate. His honor, goods, liberty, life answer continually to the people for the good use that he will make of his power. While exercising his power, moreover, he is not completely independent. The Senate watches over him in his relations with foreign powers, as well as in the distribution of positions; so he can be neither corrupted nor corrupt.

The law-makers of the Union recognized that the executive power could not fulfill its task usefully and with dignity, if they did not succeed in giving it more stability and strength than it had been granted in the particular states.

16. Federalist, *Nos. 67–77, inclusive. Constitution, art. 2. Story [*Commentaries *(ed.)], p. 315, pp. 515–80. Kent's* Commentaries *[vol. I (ed.)], p. 255 [235 (ed.)].*

x. The President and in general the executive power of the Union./
Some advantages of a strong executive power:

1. It executes the *constitutional* desires of the legislatures with more skill and sagacity than they would be able to do themselves.

2. It is a barrier against the abuse of their power; it prevents their omnipotence from degenerating into tyranny (see, on the subject of the requisite conditions for the creation of a sufficient executive power, the *Federalist,* pp. 301 and 316 [No. 70 (ed.)]).

To divide the executive power, to subordinate its movements to the desires of a council, is to diminish its accountability.

It was necessary to liberty that the President depended on the national will. He is elective, not inviolable (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 53).

The President was named for four years and could be re-elected. With a future, he had the courage to work for the public good and the means to implement it.

The President was made the one and only representative of the executive power of the Union. Care was even taken not to subordinate his will to those of a council: a dangerous measure that, while weakening the action of the government, lessens the accountability of those who govern. The Senate has the right to strike down some of the acts of the President, but it can neither force him to act, nor share the executive power with him.

The action of the legislature on the executive power can be direct; we have just seen that the Americans took care that it was not. It can also be indirect.

The chambers, by depriving the public official of his salary, take away a part of his independence; it must be feared that, masters of making laws, they will little by little take away the portion of power that the Constitution wanted to keep for him.

This dependence of the executive power is one of the vices inherent in republican constitutions. The Americans have not been able to destroy the inclination that leads legislative assemblies to take hold of government,[y] but they have made this inclination less irresistible.

y. In the manuscript: "The Americans have not been able to destroy the inclination [v: tendency], but they have made it less irresistible [v: rapid]."

Gustave de Beaumont:

> On this page there is an error of style. *Executive power* is taken here in a double sense; first, as presenting the idea of the persons who govern, and then, as including the idea of the administration itself. This word can indeed be used in this double sense, but not in places so close together, because it sows confusion in the mind. That is so true that, when we read: The Americans have not been able to destroy the inclination to drag the *executive power* into the legislative assemblies . . . , we think we are going to see the President of the United States brought into the House of Representatives, because you were speaking about him a moment before under the name executive power. This is certainly not the thought of the author, since he means, on the contrary, that the legislative assemblies are always led toward taking hold of the executive power. I would put: *The Americans have not been able to destroy the inclination that leads legislative assemblies to take hold of power, but . . .*" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 51–52).

The salary of the President is fixed, at his entry into office, for the entire time that his leadership lasts. In addition, the President is armed with a qualified veto that permits him to stop the passage of laws that would be able to destroy the portion of independence that the constitution left to him. There can only be an unequal struggle, however, between the President and the legislature, since the latter, by persevering in its intentions, always has the power to overcome the resistance that opposes it. But the qualified veto at least forces it to retrace its steps; it forces the legislature to consider the question again; and this time, it can no longer decide except with a two-thirds majority of those voting. The veto, moreover, is a kind of appeal to the people; the executive power pleads its cause and makes its reasons heard. Without this guarantee, it could be oppressed in secret. But if the legislature perseveres in its intentions, can it not always overcome the resistance that opposes it? To that I will answer that in the constitution of all peoples, no matter what its nature, there is a point where the law-maker is obliged to rely on the good sense and virtue of the citizens. This point is closer and more visible in republics, more removed and more carefully hidden in monarchies; but it is always found somewhere. There is no country where the law can foresee everything and where the institutions must take the place of reason and mores.

How the Position of the President of the United States Differs from That of a Constitutional King in France

The executive power, in the United States, limited and exceptional, like the sovereignty in the name of which it acts.—The executive power in France extends to everything, like the sovereignty there.—The King is one of the authors of the law.—The President is only the executor of the law.—Other differences that arise from the duration of the two powers.—The President hampered in the sphere of executive power.—The King is free there.—France, despite these differences, resembles a republic more than the Union does a monarchy.—Comparison of the number of officials who depend on the executive power in the two countries.

The executive power plays such a great role in the destiny of nations that I want to stop for an instant here in order to explain better what place it occupies among the Americans.

In order to conceive a clear and precise idea of the position of the President of the United States, it is useful to compare it to that of the King in one of the constitutional monarchies of Europe.[z]

z. Dissimilarity and similarity between the President and the King of England. *Federalist,* pp. 295 and 300 [No. 69 (ed.)].

America.

1. Elective magistrate.
2. Subject to the courts, accountable.
3. Qualified veto.
4. Commands the militia, but only in time of war.
5. Cannot pardon in case of impeachment.
6. He cannot *adjourn* the legislature except in a case allowed.
7. He can make treaties only with two-thirds of the Senate.
8. He can only appoint to office with the advice and consent of the Senate.
9. He can prescribe no rule concerning commerce and monetary system of the country.
10. He has no ecclesiastical jurisdiction whatsoever.

In this comparison, I will attach little importance to the external signs of power; they fool the observer more than they help.

When a monarchy is gradually transformed into a republic, the executive power there keeps titles, honors, respect, and even money, long after it has lost the reality of power. The English, after having cut off the head of one of their kings and having chased another from the throne, still knelt to speak to the successors of these princes.

On the other hand, when republics fall under the yoke of one man, power continues to appear simple, plain and modest in its manners, as if it had not already risen above everyone. When the emperors despotically disposed of the fortune and the life of their citizens, they were still called Caesar when spoken to, and they went informally to have supper at the homes of their friends.

So we must abandon the surface and penetrate deeper.

Sovereignty, in the United States, is divided between the Union and the states; while among us, it is one and compact. From that arises the first and greatest difference that I notice between the President of the United States and the King in France.

In the United States, executive power is limited and exceptional,[a] like

England.

1. Hereditary.
2. Inviolable.
3. Absolute veto.
4. At all times and throughout the kingdom.
5. In all cases.
6. He can always *prorogue* and *dissolve* Parliament.
7. He alone makes treaties. He is the only representative of England abroad.
8. He appoints to all offices, even creates offices, and beyond that can confer a multitude of graces, either *honorary* or *lucrative.*
9. On certain points he is the arbiter of commerce; he can establish markets, regulate weights and measures, strike money, set an embargo.
10. He is the head of the national church (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 58–59).

a. Édouard de Tocqueville:

How is the sovereignty represented by the executive power (that is the national sovereignty) limited and exceptional? That can only be applied to the executive power, which is in fact very limited.

Upon reflection, I understand the thought. As we saw in the preceding chapter,

the very sovereignty in whose name it acts; in France, it extends to everything, like the sovereignty there.

The Americans have a federal government; we have a national government.

This is a primary cause of inferiority that results from the very nature of things; but it is not the only one. The second in importance is this: strictly speaking, sovereignty can be defined as the right to make laws.

The King, in France, really constitutes one part of the sovereign power, since laws do not exist if he refuses to sanction them. In addition, he executes the law.

The President also executes the law, but he does not really take part in making the law, since, by refusing his consent, he cannot prevent it from existing. So he is not part of the sovereign power; he is only its agent.

Not only does the King, in France, constitute one portion of the sovereign power, but he also participates in the formation of the legislature, which is the other portion. He participates by naming the members of one chamber and by ending at his will the term of the mandate of the other. The President of the United States takes no part in the composition of the legislative body and cannot dissolve it.

The King shares with the Chambers the right to propose laws.

The President has no similar initiative.

The King is represented, within the Chambers, by a certain number of agents who set forth his views, uphold his opinions and make his maxims of government prevail.

The President has no entry into Congress; his ministers are excluded as he is, and it is only by indirect pathways that he makes his influence and his opinion penetrate this great body.

the Union was granted, by the Constitution, only a limited power, very defined and perhaps exceptional. But, it seems to me, the President does not represent only this portion of sovereignty that has been attributed to the federal government; he also represents the entire sovereignty of the country, its internal as well as external will; in a word, he is the instrument of national sovereignty (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 1–2).

So the King of France operates as an equal with the legislature, which cannot act without him, as he cannot act without it.

The President is placed beside the legislature, as an inferior and dependent power.

In the exercise of executive power strictly speaking, the point on which his position seems closest to that of the King in France, the President still remains inferior due to several very great causes.

First, the power of the King in France has the advantage of duration over that of the President. Now, duration is one of the first elements of strength. Only what must exist for a long time is loved and feared.

The President of the United States is a magistrate elected for four years. The King in France is a hereditary leader.

In the exercise of executive power, the President of the United States is constantly subject to jealous oversight. He prepares treaties, but he does not make them; he designates people for offices, but he does not appoint them.[17]

The King of France is the absolute master in the sphere of executive power.

The President of the United States is accountable for his actions. French law says that the person of the King of France is inviolable.

But above the one as above the other stands a ruling power, that of public opinion. This power is less defined in France than in the United States; less recognized, less formulated in the laws; but, in fact, it exists there. In America, it proceeds by elections and by decisions; in France, by revolutions. Hence France and the United States, despite the diversity of their constitutions, have this point in common: public opinion is, in effect, the dominant power.[b] So the generative principle of the laws is, in actual fact, the

17. *The Constitution had left it doubtful whether the President was required to ask the advice of the Senate in the case of removal, as in the case of nomination of a federal official. The* Federalist, *in No. 77, seemed to establish the affirmative; but in 1789, Congress decided with all good reason that, since the President was accountable, he could not be forced to use agents that did not have his confidence. See Kent's* Commentaries, *vol. I, p. 289.*

b. In the margin: "≠This fact, the sovereignty of the people, the capital point common to the two countries, gives a similarity to their constitutions despite the diversity of the laws.≠"

same among the two peoples, although its developments are more or less free, and the consequences that are drawn from it are often different. This principle, by its nature, is essentially republican. Consequently, I think that France, with its King, resembles a republic more than the Union, with its President, resembles a monarchy.

In all that precedes, I have been careful to point out only the main points of difference. If I had wanted to get into details, the picture would have been still more striking. But I have too much to say not to want to be brief.

I remarked that the power of the President of the United States, in his sphere, exercises only a limited sovereignty, while that of the King, in France, acts within the circle of a complete sovereignty.

I could have shown the governmental power of the King in France surpassing even its natural limits, however extensive they were, and penetrating into the administration of individual interests in a thousand ways.

To this cause of influence, I could join that which results from the great number of public officials, nearly all of whom owe their mandate to the executive power. This number has surpassed all known limits among us; it reaches 138,000.[18] Each of these 138,000 nominations must be considered as an element of strength. The President does not have an absolute right to appoint to public positions, and those positions hardly exceed 12,000.[19]

18. *The sums paid by the State to these various officials amount annually to 200,000,000 francs.*

19. *Each year in the United States an almanac, called the* National Calendar, *is published; the names of all the federal officials are found there. The* National Calendar *of 1833 furnished me with the figure I give here.*

It would follow from what precedes that the King of France has at his disposal eleven times more places than the President of the United States, although the population of France is only one and a half times greater than that of the Union.

Accidental Causes That Can Increase the Influence of the Executive Power

External security that the Union enjoys.—Cautious policy.—Army of 6,000 soldiers.—Only a few ships.—The President possesses some great prerogatives that he does not have the opportunity to use.—In what he does have the opportunity to execute, he is weak.

If the executive power is less strong in America than in France, the cause must be attributed to circumstances perhaps more than to laws.

It is principally in its relations with foreigners that the executive power of a nation finds the opportunity to deploy skill and force.

If the life of the Union were constantly threatened, if its great interests were found involved daily in those of other powerful peoples, you would see the executive power grow in opinion by what would be expected of it and by what it would execute.

The President of the United States is, it is true, the head of the army, but this army is composed of 6,000 soldiers;[c] he commands the fleet, but the fleet numbers only a few vessels; he directs the foreign affairs of the Union, but the United States has no neighbors. Separated from the rest of the world by the ocean, still too weak to want to dominate the sea, they have no enemies; and their interests are only rarely in contact with those of the other nations of the globe.

This demonstrates well that the practice of government must not be judged by theory.

The President of the United States possesses some nearly royal prerogatives that he does not have the opportunity to use; and the rights that, up to now, he is able to use are very circumscribed. The laws allow him to be strong; circumstances keep him weak.

On the contrary, circumstances, still more than the laws, give royal authority in France its greatest strength.

c. 4,000 in the manuscript.

In France, the executive power struggles constantly against immense obstacles and disposes of immense resources to overcome them. It increases with the greatness of the things that it executes and with the importance of the events that it directs, without thereby modifying its constitution.

Had the laws created it as weak and as circumscribed as that of the Union, its influence would soon become very much greater.

Why the President of the United States, to Lead Public Affairs, Does Not Need to Have a Majority in the Chambers

It is an established axiom in Europe that a constitutional King cannot govern when the opinion of the legislative chambers is not in agreement with his.

Several Presidents of the United States have been seen to lose the support of the majority of the legislative body, without having to leave power, nor without causing any great harm to society.

I have heard this fact cited to prove the independence and strength of the executive power in America. A few moments of reflection are sufficient, on the contrary, to see there the proof of its weakness.

A European King needs to obtain the support of the legislative body to fulfill the task that the constitution imposes on him, because this task is immense. A European constitutional King is not only the executor of the law; the care of its execution so completely devolves onto him that, if the law is against him, he would be able to paralyze its force. He needs the chambers to make the law; the chambers need him to execute it; they are two powers that cannot live without each other; the gears of government stop at the moment when there is discord between them.

In America, the President cannot stop the making of laws; he cannot escape the obligation to execute them. His zealous and sincere support is undoubtedly useful, but it is not necessary to the course of government. In everything essential that he does, he is directly or indirectly subject to the legislature; where he is entirely independent of it, he can hardly do anything. So it is his weakness, and not his strength, that allows him to live in opposition to the legislative power.

In Europe, there must be agreement between the King and the Chambers, because there can be a serious struggle between them. In America, agreement is not required, because the struggle is impossible.

Of the Election of the President

The danger of the system of election increases in proportion to the extent of the prerogatives of the executive power.—The Americans can adopt this system because they can do without a strong executive power.—How circumstances favor the establishment of the elective system.—Why the election of the President does not make the principles of government change.—Influence that the election of the President exercises on the fate of secondary officials.

The system of election, applied to the head of the executive power among a great people, presents some dangers that experience and historians have sufficiently pointed out.

Consequently, I do not want to talk about it except in relation to America.

The dangers feared from the system of election are more or less great, depending on the place that the executive power occupies and its importance in the State, depending on the method of election and the circumstances in which the people who elect are found.

Not without reason, the elective system, applied to the head of State, is criticized for offering such a great lure to individual ambitions and inflaming them so strongly in the pursuit of power that often, when legal means are no longer sufficient, they appeal to force when right happens to desert them.

It is clear that the greater the prerogatives of the executive power, the greater the lure; also, the more the ambition of the pretenders is excited, the more it finds support among a host of men of lesser ambition who hope to share power after their candidate has triumphed.[d]

d. The wording of this paragraph is a bit different in the manuscript. The published version was suggested by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 52–53).

The dangers of the elective system increase therefore in direct proportion to the influence exercised by the executive power in the affairs of the State.

The Polish revolutions should not be attributed only to the elective system in general, but to the fact that the elected magistrate was the head of a large monarchy.[e]

So before discussing the absolute goodness of the elective system, there is always an intervening question to resolve, that of knowing if the geographic position, laws, habits, mores and opinions of the people among whom you want to introduce it allow you to establish a weak and dependent executive power. To want the representative of the State to be simultaneously armed with great power and elected is, to my mind, to express two contradictory desires. For my part, I know only one way to make hereditary royalty change to a state of elected power. Its sphere of action must be contracted in advance; its prerogatives gradually reduced; and little by little, the people accustomed to living without its aid. But the republicans of Europe are hardly concerned with this. Since many among them hate tyranny only because they are the objects of its rigors, the extent of executive power does not offend them; they attack only its origin, without noticing the tight bond that links these two things.

No one has yet been found who cared about risking his honor and his life to become President of the United States, because the President has only a temporary, limited and dependent power. Fortune must put an immense prize at stake in order for desperate players to enter the lists. [≠For my part, I would prefer to be *Premier Ministre* in France than President of the Union.≠] No candidate, until now, has been able to raise ardent sympathies and dangerous popular passions in his favor.[f] The reason is simple. Once at the head of the government,[g] he can distribute to his friends nei-

e. Cf. Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne,* chapters VIII and XIV.

f. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Carefully check if this paragraph agrees well with what the author says in the chapters on the crisis [of election] and on re-election. You must be careful about even the appearance of contradiction. Later you talk about intrigues, about the efforts of the President to get himself re-elected and about the development of his power in this regard" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 13).

g. In the manuscript: ". . . the President has only a few places . . ."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "These sentences are in clear opposition to what the author

ther much power, nor much wealth, nor much glory; and his influence in the State[h] is too weak for factions to see their success or their ruin in his elevation to power.

Hereditary monarchies have a great advantage. Since the particular interest of a family is continually tied in a close way to the interest of the State, there is never a single moment when the latter is left abandoned to itself. I do not know if in these monarchies public affairs are better conducted than elsewhere; but at least there is always someone who takes charge for good or ill, depending on his capacity.[j]

In elective States, on the contrary, at the approach of the election and a long time before it happens, the gears of government no longer function, in a way, except by themselves. The laws can undoubtedly be put together so that the election takes place at one go and rapidly, and the seat of executive power never remains vacant so to speak; but no matter what is done, an empty place exists mentally despite the efforts of the law-maker.

At the approach of the election, the head of the executive power thinks only of the struggle to come; he no longer has a future; he can undertake nothing, and pursues only languidly what someone else perhaps is going to achieve. "I am so near the moment of my retirement," wrote President Jefferson on 21 [28 (ed.)] January 1809 (six weeks before the election), "that I no longer take part in public affairs except by expressing my opinion. To me, it seems just to leave to my successor the initiation of measures that he will have to execute and for which he will have to bear responsibility."

On its side, the nation has its eyes focused only on a single point; it is occupied only with overseeing the birth about to take place.

says on pages 346 and 347. Moreover, can one say that a man has only a few places to distribute when 20,000 nominations depend on him in a machine as simple as the American organization?" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 14).

h. Cf. non-alphabetic notebook 1, conversation with John (?) Livingston (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 60).

j. "In France, for society to work, social power must be not only *centralized,* but also *stable.*

"Power can be centralized in an assembly; then it is *strong,* but not *stable.* It can be centralized in a man. Then it is less strong, but more stable" (YTC, Cve, p. 64).

The more vast the place occupied by the executive power in the leadership of public affairs, the greater and more necessary is its habitual action, and the more dangerous such a state of things is. Among a people who have contracted the habit of being governed by the executive power, and with even more reason, of being administered by it, election cannot help but produce a profound disturbance.

In the United States, the action of the executive power can slow down with impunity, because this action is weak and circumscribed.

When the head of government is elected, a lack of stability in the internal and external policies of the State almost always follows. That is one of the principal vices of this system.

But this vice is felt more or less, depending on the portion of power granted to the elected magistrate. In Rome, the principles of government never varied, although the consuls were changed annually, because the Senate was the directing power; and the Senate was an hereditary body. In most of the monarchies of Europe, if the King were elected, the kingdom would change faces with each new choice.

In America, the President exercises a fairly great influence on affairs of State, but he does not conduct them; the preponderant power resides in the whole national representation. Therefore, the mass of people must be changed, and not only the President, in order for the maxims of policy to change. Consequently, in America, the system of election, applied to the head of the executive power, does not harm the steadiness of government in a very tangible way.

The lack of steadiness is an evil so inherent in the elective system, moreover, that it still makes itself keenly felt in the President's sphere of action, no matter how circumscribed.

Mr. Quincy Adams, when he took power, dismissed most of those appointed by his predecessor; and of all the removable officials that the federal administration uses, I do not know of a single one who was left in office by General Jackson in the first year that followed the election.[k]

k. This paragraph, which does not appear in the manuscript, is included in the edition of 1835 and eliminated from the sixth and later editions, following a letter from John Quincy Adams, dated June 12, 1837:

The Americans thought correctly that the head of the executive power, in order to fulfill his mission and bear the weight of full responsibility, had to remain free, as much as possible, to choose his agents himself and to remove them at will;[m] the legislative body watches over rather than directs

The truth is that I never dismissed a single individual named by my predecessor. It was a principle of my administration to dismiss no person from office but for misconduct, and there were in the course of four years that I presided, only two persons dismissed from civil executive office, both of them for gross official misdemeanors. My successor it is true did pursue a different principle. He dismissed many subordinate officer executive [*sic*] not however so generally as the remainder of the paragraph in your book, which I have cited, supposes. He left in office many of those who had been appointed by his predecessors, and would probably have left many more but for the influences by which he was surrounded (YTC, CId).

On December 4, 1837, Tocqueville answers from Paris:

I receive with great pleasure the complaint that you very much wanted to address to me relating to a sentence in my book that concerns you. You can be assured that this sentence will disappear in the sixth edition which is supposed to appear, I believe, this winter. I am delighted that you have given me this occasion to please you and to correct an error that I regret having made. The fact you complain about and that you say is inaccurate had been affirmed to me in America itself (my notes prove it) by a man on whose veracity I thought I could count (YTC, CId, and *OC,* VII, pp. 67–68). See, in the non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, the second conversation with Mr. Walker (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 130).

m. In the manuscript:

The legislative body therefore interferes only very little in the choices of men to whom public positions are entrusted. It limits itself to supervising the President; it does not direct him. What is the result? At each election, a complete replacement takes place in the federal administration. [In the margin: This happened only under Quincy Adams and under Jackson.] There is not an employee so lowly who can claim to escape from the result of the vote. His place belongs in advance to the friends of the new power. People in the constitutional monarchies of Europe complain about seeing the fate of the secondary employees of the administration depend on the fate of the ministers. It is still much worse in States where the head of government is elected. Of the [blank (ed.)] revocable officials employed by the federal administration, I do not think that there was a single one that General Jackson left in place the first year that followed his election. The reason for this difference is easily understood. In monarchies, the ministers, in order to come to power and remain there, have no need to extend the circle of their influence very far; as long as they obtain the majority in the chambers, it is enough. But to bring about his election or reelection, the President needs to reach the popular masses; and in order to succeed in that, he must not neglect

the President. From that it follows that at each new election, the fate of all federal employees is as if in suspense.

a single means of action. Each election, therefore, brings to public affairs a new administration whose education is completed at the expense of the administered. As for the individual misfortunes that result . . .

(In the margin) *False,* for to bring about election and reelection of the deputies, the ministers need the same means.

Hervé de Tocqueville:

Here is a piece that Alexis proposes to delete. But it contains views and a fact worth keeping; perhaps it could be modified in the following way:

After the sentence: *The legislative body therefore interferes only very little in,* I would like a short note that explained how the legislative body intervenes in nominations. The flaw in this explanation is that something is missing.

A complete replacement takes place in the administration. Here a note at the bottom of the page where you will say that, because this replacement has taken place at the election of the last two Presidents, it may be believed that this precedent will be followed by their successors (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 14).

Gustave de Beaumont:

I would very much hesitate to delete the piece crossed out. Possibly it contains some ideas and opinions that need to be revised and modified. But as a whole it is very interesting and will be especially for the public, because it touches on a question *extremely exciting* to the *personal interests* of all public officials.

The contrast between the President and the ministers does not exist; they are in an analogous position in the sense that the ministers of a French monarchy have an interest in bringing their weight to bear on the least agents, in order to gain the majority in the chambers from the electoral body. And they cannot remain ministers if they do not have this majority, just as the President will not be elected if he does not gain it.

But here is the difference: a minister cannot think of dismissing everyone in order to remain minister; and if he wanted to do it, he would not be able to do so. Because public opinion, on which he depends, would never understand that the *end* justified the *means.* It is the opposite when it is a matter, for a man, of being head of the State (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 53–54).

Édouard de Tocqueville:

Whatever your decision regarding this piece, I will make several observations; first this sentence: *to remove them at will* is trite. But the most serious flaw in this piece is to present a striking contradiction to what you said a few sentences earlier. Here you say that all the employees are replaced at the coming into office of the President and that he is obligated, in the machinery he puts in motion, *to reach the popular masses,* without neglecting a *single means of action.* While you say, p. 324, that no one cares about *risking his honor and his life to become President,* that no candidate

In the constitutional monarchies of Europe, the complaint is that the destiny of the obscure agents of the administration often depends on the fate of the ministers. It is even worse in States where the head of government is elected. The reason for this is simple. In constitutional monarchies, ministers replace each other rapidly; but the principal representative of the executive power never changes, which contains the spirit of innovation within certain limits. So administrative systems there vary in the details rather than in the principles; one cannot be suddenly substituted for another without causing a kind of revolution. In America, this revolution takes place every four years in the name of law.

As for the individual misfortunes that are the natural consequence of such legislation, it must be admitted that the lack of stability in the lot of officials does not produce in America the evils that would be expected elsewhere. In the United States, it is so easy to make an independent living that to remove an official from an office that he holds sometimes means taking away the comforts of life, but never the means to sustain it.

I said at the beginning of this chapter that the dangers of the mode of election, applied to the head of the executive power, were more or less great, depending on the circumstances in which the people who elect are found.

Efforts to reduce the role of the executive power are made in vain. There is something over which this power exercises a great influence, whatever the place that the laws have given it. That is foreign policy; a negotiation can hardly be started and successfully carried through except by a single man. [{Physical force can only be adequately put in motion [v: directed] by a single will.}]

The more precarious and perilous the position of a people, the more the need for consistency and stability makes itself felt in the direction of foreign

has been able to raise *ardent sympathies in his favor* and that he can attach to his cause neither *personal interest* nor party interest, that he has only a few *places* to distribute *to his friends.*

How then do you say afterwards, p. 330, that *the place of the lowliest employee belongs in advance to the friends of the new power,* and that General Jackson did not leave a single official in place? And again, page 346, *the positions he has at his disposal,* etc. (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 3).

affairs, and the more dangerous the system of election of the head of State becomes.

The policy of the Americans in relation to the whole world is simple; you would almost be able to say that no one needs them, and that they need no one. Their independence is never threatened.

So among them, the role of executive power is as limited by circumstances as by laws. The President can frequently change his views without having the State suffer or perish.

Whatever the prerogatives with which the executive power is vested, the time that immediately precedes the election and the time while it is taking place can always be considered as a period of national crisis.

The more the internal situation of a country is troubled and the greater its external perils, the more dangerous this moment of crisis is for it. Among the peoples of Europe, there are very few who would not have to fear conquest or anarchy every time that they chose a new leader.

In America, society is so constituted that it can maintain itself on its own and without help; external dangers are never pressing. The election of the President is a cause for agitation, not for ruin.

Mode of Election

Skill which the American law-makers have demonstrated in the choice of the mode of election.—Creation of a special electoral body.—Separate vote of special electors.—In what case the House of Representatives is called to choose the President.—What has happened in the twelve elections that have taken place since the Constitution has been in force.

Apart from the dangers inherent in the principle, there are many others that arise from the very forms of election and that can be avoided by the care of the law-maker.[n]

n. The draft of this passage has been corrected by Gustave de Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 55).

When a people gather in arms in the public square to choose a leader, it exposes itself not only to the dangers presented by the elective system itself, but also to all those of civil war which arise from such a method of election.

When Polish laws made the choice of the king depend on the *veto* of a single man, they invited the murder of this man or created anarchy in advance.

As you study the institutions of the United States and look more attentively at the political and social situation of this country, you notice a marvelous accord there between fortune and human efforts. America was a new country; but the people who lived there had already long made use of liberty elsewhere: two great causes of internal order. Furthermore, America had no fear of conquest. The American law-makers, taking advantage of these favorable circumstances, had no difficulty in establishing a weak and dependent executive power; having created it so, they could make it elective without risk.

Nothing remained for them to do except to choose, from among the different systems of election, the least dangerous; the rules that they drew up in this respect completed admirably the guarantees that the physical and political constitution of the country already provided.

The problem to solve was to find a mode of election that, while still expressing the real will of the people, little excited their passions and kept the people in the least possible suspense. First, they granted that a *simple* majority would make the law. But it was still very difficult to obtain this majority without having to fear delays that they wanted to avoid above all.

It is rare, in fact, to see a man get the majority of votes on the first try from among a large population. The difficulty increases still more in a republic of confederated states where local influences are much more developed and more powerful.

A way to obviate this second obstacle presented itself: to delegate the electoral powers of the nation to a body that represented it.

This mode of election made a majority more probable; for the fewer the electors, the easier it is for them to agree among themselves. It also presented more guarantees for a good choice.

But should the right to elect be entrusted to the legislative body itself,

the usual representative of the nation; or, on the contrary, must an electoral college be formed whose sole purpose would be to proceed to the naming of the President?[0]

The Americans preferred this last option. They thought that the men sent to make ordinary laws would only incompletely represent the wishes of the people relating to the election of the first magistrate. Being elected, moreover, for more than a year, they could represent a will that had already changed. They judged that, if the legislature was charged with electing the head of the executive power, its members would become, long before the election, the objects of corrupting maneuvers and the playthings of intrigue; while special electors, like jurors, would remain unknown in the crowd until the day when they must act and would only appear at one moment to deliver their decision.

So they established that each state would name a certain number of electors,[20] who would in turn elect the President. And, since they had noticed that assemblies charged with choosing heads of government in elective countries inevitably became centers of passions and intrigue, that sometimes they took hold of powers that did not belong to them, and that often their operations, and the uncertainties that followed, lasted long enough to put the State in danger, they decided that the electors would all vote on a set day, but without meeting together.[21]

The mode of election in two stages made a majority probable, but did not guarantee it, for it could be that the electors would differ among themselves as those who named them would have differed.

In this case, the Americans were led necessarily to take one of three measures: it was necessary to have new electors named, or to consult once again those already named, or finally to refer the choice to a new authority.

0. Gustave de Beaumont: "335, 336, 337, 338, etc. . . . All these pages seem excellent to me and I very strongly urge the author not to make the corrections that are advised by *imprudent* friends" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 55–56).

20. *As many as the members they send to Congress. The number of electors for the election of 1833 was 288 (*The National Calendar *[1833] [p. 19 (ed.)]).*

21. *The electors of the same state meet; but they send to the seat of the central government the list of individual votes and not the result of the majority vote.*

The first two methods, apart from the fact that they were not very certain, led to delays and perpetuated an always dangerous excitement.

So they settled on the third and agreed that the votes of the electors would be transmitted in secret to the president of the Senate. He would count the votes on the day fixed and in the presence of the two houses. If no candidate had gained a majority, the House of Representatives would itself proceed immediately to the election; but they took care to limit its right. The Representatives could only elect one of the three candidates who had obtained the largest number of votes.[22]

As you see, only in a rare case, difficult to foresee in advance, is the election left to the ordinary representatives of the nation; and even then, they can only choose a citizen already designated by a strong minority of the special electors; a happy combination, that reconciles the respect owed to the will of the people with the rapidity of execution and the guarantees of order required by the interest of the State. Yet, by making the House of Representatives decide the question, in case of division, the complete solution of all difficulties had still not been achieved; for the majority in the House of Representatives could in turn be doubtful, and this time the Constitution offered no remedy. But by establishing required candidates, by restricting their number to three, by relying on the choices of some enlightened men, it had smoothed all the obstacles[23] over which it could have some power; the others were inherent in the elective system itself.[p]

22. *In this circumstance, it is the majority of the states, and not the majority of the members, that decides the question. So that New York does not have more influence on the deliberation than Rhode Island. Thus the citizens of the Union, considered as forming one and the same people, are consulted first; and when they cannot agree, the division by states is revived, and each of the latter is given a separate and independent vote.*

That again is one of the strange things that the federal constitution presents and only the clash of opposing interests can explain.

23. *In 1801, however, Jefferson was named only on the thirty-sixth ballot.*

p. Tocqueville writes to Corcelle:

> There is a piece of your work that particularly pleased me a great deal. It is where you indicate, as a remedy for the excesses of democracy, election by stages. In my opinion that is a capital idea that must be introduced very prudently and that is very

During the forty-five years the federal Constitution has existed, the United States has already elected its President twelve times.

Ten elections were done immediately, by the simultaneous vote of the special electors seated at different points of the territory.

The House of Representatives has used the exceptional right with which it is vested in case of division only twice. The first, in 1801, was at the time of the election of Jefferson; and the second, in 1825, when Quincy Adams was named.

Election Crisis

The moment of the election of the President can be considered a moment of national crisis.—Why.—Passions of the people.—Preoccupation of the President.—Calm which follows the agitation of the election.

I have talked about the favorable circumstances in which the United States was found for adopting the elective system, and I have shown the precautions taken by the law-makers to reduce its dangers. The Americans are used to having all kinds of elections. Experience has taught them what level of agitation they can reach and where they must stop. The vast extent of their territory and the distribution of the inhabitants make a collision

important to introduce gradually to the thinking of those who love liberty and the equality of men. I firmly believe, without yet saying it as strongly as I think it, that different stages of election form the most powerful and perhaps the only means that democratic peoples have to give the direction of society to the most skillful, without making them independent of everyone else (Letter of October 1835 (?) *Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, I, p. 57. Cf. *Souvenirs, OC,* XII, pp. 188–90).

In the report that he did as a member of the Commission charged with the revision of the constitution ("Rapport fait à l'Assemblée législative au nom de la Commission chargée d'examiner les propositions relatives à la révision de la constitution . . . ," *Moniteur Universel,* July 9, 1851, pp. 1943–1945, and *OCB,* IX, pp. 574–606), Tocqueville praises the American system of indirect election of the President. He sees there a way to avoid revolutions as well as the temptation to resort to dictatorship. In a letter of 1853 (partially reproduced in *OCB,* VI, pp. 212–20), he will share with W. R. Greg, English essayist and ardent defender of free trade, extremely lucid views on French electoral laws under the monarchy and the republic.

among the different parties less probable and less perilous than anywhere else. Until now, the political circumstances in which the nation has found itself during elections have not presented any real danger. [<Finally, the power of the President is so dependent and so limited that the passions of the candidates and those of their partisans can never be either very ardent or very long-lasting.>]

But the moment of the election of the President of the United States can still be considered a period of national crisis.

The influence that the President exercises on the course of public affairs is undoubtedly weak and indirect, but it extends over the entire nation; the choice of President has only a moderate importance for each citizen, but it matters to all citizens. Now, an interest, however small, assumes a character of great importance from the moment it becomes a general interest.

Compared to a king of Europe, the President has certainly few means to create partisans for himself; nonetheless, the places he has at his disposal are numerous enough[q] for several thousands of the voters to be either directly or indirectly interested in his cause.

In the United States as elsewhere, moreover, parties feel the need to gather around a man, in order to be more easily understood by the crowd. So they generally use the name of the candidate for President as a symbol; in him, they personify their theories. Thus, parties have a great interest in determining the election in their favor, not so much for making their doctrines triumph with the help of the elected President, as for showing, by his election, that these doctrines have won the majority.

Long before the fixed moment arrives, the election becomes the greatest and, so to speak, the sole matter that preoccupies minds. Factions redouble their ardor [the administration finds itself attacked from all directions; {slanders, insults, rantings of all types are thrown lavishly against it}]; all the artificial passions that can be imagined, in a happy and tranquil country, are stirred up at this moment in full view.

q. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Check if that agrees with page 324 where it is said: *no candidate, until now, has been able to raise, etc.*" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 15).

On his side, the President is absorbed by the care to defend himself. He no longer governs in the interest of the State, but in that of his re-election; he grovels before the majority; and often, instead of resisting its passions, as his duty requires, he runs ahead of its caprices.

As the election approaches, intrigues become more active; agitation, more intense and more widespread. The citizens divide into several camps, each taking the name of its candidate. The entire nation falls into a feverish state; the election is then the daily story of the public papers, the subject of individual conversations, the goal of all moves, the object of all thoughts, the sole interest of the moment. [≠The danger certainly is more apparent than real.≠]

It is true that as soon as fortune has decided, this ardor dissipates; everything becomes calm, and the river, once overflowing, retreats peacefully to its bed. But shouldn't we be astonished that the storm could arise? [<For the choice that so strongly preoccupied the nation can influence its prosperity and its dreams only in a very indirect way; the passions that arose did not find their source in those real interests and penchants [doubtful reading (ed.)] that so profoundly trouble the human heart [v: society] [v: stirring the deepest levels of the human heart and turning society upside down to be satisfied]. For the election of the President of the United States cannot put into play any of those dangerous human passions that find their source in profound beliefs or in great positive interests.>]

Of the Re-election of the President

When the head of the executive power is eligible for re-election, it is the State itself that schemes and corrupts.—Desire to be re-elected that dominates all the thoughts of the President of the United States.—Disadvantage of re-election, special to America.—The natural vice of democracies is the gradual subservience of all powers to the slightest desires of the majority.—The re-election of the President favors this vice.

Were the law-makers of the United States wrong or right to allow the re-election of the President?[r]

To prevent the head of the executive power from being re-elected seems, at first glance, contrary to reason.[s] We know what influence the talents or character of one man exercise over the destiny of an entire people, especially in difficult circumstances and in times of crisis. Laws that forbid citizens to re-elect their primary magistrate would deny them the best means of ensuring the prosperity of the State or of saving it. You would, moreover, arrive at this bizarre result, that a man would be excluded from the government at the very moment when he would have finally proved that he was capable of governing well.[t]

These reasons are certainly powerful; but can't they be opposed by still stronger ones?[u]

r. In the *Souvenirs,* Tocqueville reproaches himself for having supported, in the committee to draft the Constitution of 1848, Beaumont's proposal that urged that a president leaving office not be re-elected. "On this occasion, we both fell into a great error that, I am very afraid, will have very damaging consequences," wrote Tocqueville in March 1851 (*Souvenirs, OC,* XII, p. 190). The impossibility of being re-elected was, we know, one of the reasons that pushed Louis Napoleon to the *coup d'état.*

s. In the margin: "≠Eight years, term indicated by experience.≠" See note y p. 229.

t. In the margin: "≠1. The great end of the laws is to mingle individual interest and State interest.

2. Weakening of the executive power, capital vice to avoid in republics.≠"

u. Variant:

<The great object of the laws [v: of the law-maker] must always be intimately to mingle individual interest and State interest. Certainly laws can never reach such a

Intrigue and corruption are the natural vices of elective governments. But when the head of the State can be re-elected, these vices spread indefinitely and compromise the very existence of the country. When an ordinary candidate wants to succeed by intrigue, his maneuvers can only be

degree of perfection, but it can be said that the more difficult it is to separate these two interests, the better the laws.

If the President were not eligible for re-election, he would have only one goal, to leave a great recollection in the memory of men and to return to private life surrounded by the respect as well as the love of his fellow citizens. To obtain this goal, he could hardly follow another path than to govern well; for at the bottom of the human heart, there is a secret instinct that constantly calls out that the approval of the present [v: the sincere approval of contemporaries] and the admiration of posterity belong to virtue alone.

In place of this entirely non-material and distant interest, the American laws have given the President a positive and current interest that, if not contrary to, is at least distinct from that of the State.

The President has naturally two goals to pursue: to govern well and to be re-elected. I know you will stop me here by saying: the two interests are the same, for the only way to be re-elected is to govern well. This argument is far from satisfying to me; it goes back to the argument that the majority is not subject to error, that it has neither prejudice to be flattered nor passions to be inflamed, that favor [added: and intrigue] have no hold on it, a proposition that cannot be sustained and that does not merit the effort to refute. It is incontestable that there are two ways for the President to be re-elected. The first, it is true, consists of governing well, but that is within reach of only great souls. Even then, success is always uncertain. Washington had lost the majority when he voluntarily removed himself from public activities. The second, easier and more within the reach of ordinary minds, is to buy partisans at any cost, to make offices the recompense for services rendered to the President, not to the country, to exploit public power in favor of individual interests, and to turn all laws into a combination of personal and party interests.

It is impossible to examine the ordinary course of public affairs in the United States without noticing that the desire to be re-elected dominates the thoughts of the President, that the entire policy of his administration focuses on this point, that his slightest declarations are subordinated to this end, that above all, as the moment of crisis nears, the interest of the State becomes more and more incidental to him and re-election becomes his principal interest.

By allowing re-election of the President, the Americans introduced intrigue and corruption [v: a new element] into government.>

≠That is still not the most frightening result of the system of re-election. Certain physicians believe that when each man comes into the world, he already has the seed of the illness that one day will kill him. This remark may be applied to government.≠

Each government . . .

extended over a circumscribed space. When, on the contrary, the head of the State himself gets into the fray, he borrows for his own use the strength of the government.[v]

In the first case, it is one man with his limited means; in the second, it is the State itself with its immense resources that schemes and corrupts.

The ordinary citizen who uses reprehensible maneuverings to gain power can harm public prosperity only in an indirect manner; but if the representative of the executive power enters the lists, concern for the government becomes, for him, something of secondary interest; the main interest is his election. Negotiations, like laws, are, for him, nothing more than electoral schemes; positions become recompense for services rendered, not to the nation, but to its leader. Even if the action of the government would not always be contrary to the interest of the country, it would at least no longer serve it. Yet the action of the government is undertaken for its use alone.

It is impossible to consider the ordinary course of affairs in the United States, without noticing that the desire to be re-elected dominates the thoughts of the President; that the entire policy of his administration leads to this point; that his smallest steps are subordinated to this end; that above all, as the moment of crisis approaches, individual interest replaces general interest in his mind.

So the principle of re-election makes the corrupting influence of elective government more widespread and more dangerous. It tends to degrade the political morality of the people and to replace patriotism with cleverness.

In America, it attacks the sources of national existence even more fundamentally.

Every government carries within itself a natural vice that seems attached to the very principle of its life; the genius of the law-maker is to discern

v. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Isn't Alexis drawing too excited a picture there, relative to what precedes? He tried hard in several places to show us that the President has only limited means at his disposal. Here he exalts his strength and his immense resources. Perhaps the imagination of the author has sought to prove too much, for fear of not proving enough" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 16).

this well.[w] A State can overcome many bad laws, and the evil they cause is often exaggerated. But every law whose effect is to develop this seed of death cannot miss becoming fatal in the long run, even if its bad effects do not immediately make themselves felt.

The principle of ruin in absolute monarchies is the unlimited and unreasonable expansion of royal power. A measure that removes the counterweight that the constitution left to this power would therefore be radically bad, even if its effects seemed unnoticeable for a long time.

In the same way, in countries where democracy governs and where the people constantly draw everything to themselves, laws which make their action more and more immediate and irresistible attack, in a direct way, the existence of the government.

The greatest merit of the American law-makers is to have seen this truth clearly and to have had the courage to put it into practice. [{The greatest glory of this people is to have known how to appreciate it and to submit themselves to it.}]

They understood that beyond the people there needed to be a certain number of powers that, without being completely independent of the people, nonetheless enjoyed in their sphere a fairly large degree of liberty; so, though forced to obey the permanent direction of the majority, they could nevertheless struggle against its caprices and refuse its dangerous demands.

To this effect, they concentrated all the executive power of the nation in one pair of hands; they gave the President extensive prerogatives, and armed him with a veto, to resist the encroachments of the legislature.[x]

w. Cf. Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois,* particularly books II and VIII.
x. Hervé de Tocqueville:

This locution seems contradictory to what has been said and repeated earlier about the slight power of the President. Isn't it to be feared that Alexis will be accused of reducing or augmenting this power as his theory requires? Perhaps this chapter has the fault of not coming to a conclusion. It is clear that the author blames re-election, and I believe he is right. What would he want in its place? Four years in office are very few.

Édouard de Tocqueville:

It doesn't seem to me that there is a contradiction here. They armed the President with great power and *took from him the will to make use of it.* That is why this power, strong in appearance, is weak in reality.

But by introducing the principle of re-election, they have partially destroyed their work. They have granted great power to the President, and have taken from him the will to use it.

Not re-eligible, the President was not independent of the people, for he did not cease being responsible to them; but the favor of the people was not so necessary to him that he had to bend in all cases to their will.

Re-eligible (and this is true above all in our time when political morality is becoming lax and when men of great character are disappearing), the President of the United States is only a docile instrument in the hands of the majority. He loves what it loves, hates what it hates; he flies ahead of its will, anticipates its complaints, bends before its slightest desires. The law-makers wanted him to lead the majority, and he follows it.

Thus, in order not to deprive the State of the talents of one man, they have rendered his talents almost useless; and to arrange for a resource in extraordinary circumstances, they have exposed the country to daily dangers.[y]

Of the Federal Courts[24]

Political importance of the judicial power in the United States.—Difficulty in treating this subject.—Utility of the judicial system in confederations.—What courts could the Union

Everything has its advantages and disadvantages. Here Alexis presents those of the principle of election, without claiming, by doing so, that it must be destroyed (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 17–18).

y. "In my opinion the President of the United States should be chosen for a longer term and not be re-eligible" (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 58).

24. *See ch. VI entitled* "Of the Judicial Power in the United States." *This chapter shows the general principles of the Americans in the matter of the judicial system. Also see the federal Constitution, art. 3.*

See the work with the title: The Federalist, *Nos. 78–83 inclusive.* Constitutional Law, Being a View of the Practice and Jurisdiction of the Courts of the United States, *by Thomas Sergeant.*

*See Story [*Commentaries *(ed.)], pp. 134–62, 489–511, 581–668. See the organic law of September 24, 1789, in the collection entitled:* Laws of the United States, *by Story, vol. I, p. 53.*

[Kent's Commentaries, *vol. I, p. 275 [273 (ed.)] and following.]*

use?—Necessity of establishing federal courts of justice.—Organization of the federal judicial system.—The Supreme Court.—How it differs from all the courts of justice that we know.

I have examined the legislative power and the executive power of the Union. It still remains for me to consider the judicial power.

Here I must reveal my fears to readers.

The judicial institutions exercise a great influence on the destiny of the Anglo-Americans; they hold a very important place among political institutions properly so called. From this point of view, they particularly merit our attention.

But how to make the political action of the American courts understood, without entering into some of the technical details of their constitution and of their forms; and how to get into the details without discouraging, by the natural dryness of such a subject, the curiosity of the reader? How to remain clear and still be concise?

[<So I have said only what I believed indispensable for someone to judge the political action of courts within the confederation.> So often, I have assumed the reader's pre-existent ideas on the administration of justice among the people of the English race; even more often I counted on him searching in the sources that I point out in order to fill out my ideas. In a word, I have said only what I believed indispensable for someone to be able to understand the political action of the federal courts.]

I do not flatter myself that I have escaped these different dangers. Men of the world will still find that I go on too long; legal specialists will think that I am too brief. But that is a disadvantage connected to my subject in general and to the special matter that I am treating at this moment.

The greatest difficulty was not to know how the federal government would be constituted, but how obedience to its laws would be assured.

Governments generally have only two means to overcome the efforts of the governed to resist them: the physical force that they find within themselves; the moral force that the decisions of the courts bestow on them.

A government that would have only war to enforce obedience to its laws would be very close to its ruin. One of two things would probably happen to it. If it were weak and moderate, it would use force only at the last ex-

tremity and would let a host of incidents of partial disobedience go by unnoticed; then the State would fall little by little into anarchy.

If it were audacious and powerful, it would resort daily to the use of violence, and soon you would see it degenerate into pure military despotism. Its inaction and its action would be equally harmful to the governed.

The great object of justice is to substitute the idea of law for that of violence; to place intermediaries between the government and the use of physical force.

The power of opinion generally granted by men to the intervention of the courts is something surprising. This power is so great that it is still attached to judicial form when the substance no longer exists; it gives flesh to the shadow.

The moral force with which the courts are vested renders the use of physical force infinitely rarer, substituting for it in most cases; and when, finally, physical force must be exerted, its power is doubled by the moral force that is joined with it.

A federal government, more than another government, must desire to obtain the support of the judicial system, because it is weaker by its nature; and efforts at resistance can more easily be organized against it.[25] If it always and immediately had to resort to the use of force, it would not be adequate to its task.[z]

25. *It is federal laws that most need courts, and yet federal laws have least accepted them. The cause is that most confederations have been formed by independent states that had no real intention of obeying the central government; and, while giving it the right to command, they carefully reserved to themselves the ability to disobey.*

z. The great interest of the law-maker is to substitute as many intermediaries as possible between man and the use of physical force. All men have known propensities, based on known needs, interests and passions. The natural inclination of man will always be to gain for himself what he desires, or to avoid what displeases him, by the shortest and most effective of all means: physical force. It does not depend on the laws to prevent men, absolutely and in all cases, from using physical force. But it does depend on them to reduce the occasions greatly. For that, the *legal* means of action and of resistance must be multiplied. Reduced in this way to using force only in extremely rare circumstances, or for satisfying clearly evil passions, man will renounce the use of *violence* almost completely. That is why, where the agents of the administration are *open to attack* before the courts, administrative power is more respected within the circle of its attributions, and revolts are more rare.

To make citizens obey its laws, or to repel the aggressions that would be directed against it, the Union therefore had a particular need for courts.

But what courts could it use? Each state already had a judicial power organized within it. Would it be necessary to resort to these courts? Would it be necessary to create a federal judicial system? It is easy to prove that the Union could not adapt to its use the judicial power established in the states.

It is undoubtedly important to the security of each person and to the liberty of all that the judicial power should be separated from all the others; but it is no less necessary to national existence that the different powers of the State have the same origin, follow the same principles and act in the same sphere, in a word, that they are *correlative* and *homogeneous.* No one, I imagine, has ever thought to have crimes committed in France judged by foreign courts in order to be more certain of the impartiality of the magistrates.

The Americans form only a single people, in relation to their federal government. But in the midst of this people, political bodies, dependent on the national government on certain points and independent on all the others, have been allowed to continue to exist; they have their particular origins, their own doctrines and their special means of action. To entrust the enforcement of the laws of the Union to courts instituted by these political bodies, was to deliver the nation to foreign judges.

When the American Union had only ≠war to make the different states obey, it was not obeyed at all; and if the Union had wanted to be, it would have enveloped America in a series of violent scenes. From the moment when it was able to use the courts [text interrupted (ed.)]≠ There is such a social state[1] where power, to exist, needs the prompt and passive obedience of its agents. (This is the case of several European nations.) Then, it avoids the legal impediments that would hamper its march and prefers to risk insurrections more than trials. But the closer you get to this situation, the further you get from civilization. In Turkey, where there is only a single intermediary between obedience and revolt, either you submit to the Sultan or you strangle him.

1. There are governments for which the rapidity of enforcement is a condition of life (YTC, CVb, pp. 21–22).

Cf. note m for p. 90, where Hervé de Tocqueville also refers to strangling the Sultan of Turkey. For Montesquieu and his entire period, the government of this country was the best possible example of oriental despotism.

Even more, each state is not only a foreigner in relation to the Union, but it is also a daily adversary, since the sovereignty of the Union can only be lost to the profit of that of the states.

So by having the laws of the Union applied by the courts of the individual states, the nation would be delivered, not only to foreign judges, but also to partial judges.

It was not their character alone, moreover, that made the state courts incapable of serving a national end; it was above all their number.

At the moment when the federal Constitution was formed, there were already in the United States thirteen supreme courts of justice from which there was no appeal. Today they number twenty-four. How to accept that a State can endure when its fundamental laws can be interpreted and applied in twenty-four different ways at once! Such a system is as contrary to reason as to the lessons of experience.

So the law-makers of America agreed to create a federal judicial power, in order to apply the laws of the Union and to decide certain questions of general interest which were carefully defined in advance.

All of the judicial power of the Union was concentrated in a single tribunal called the Supreme Court of the United States. But to facilitate the dispatch of affairs, inferior courts were added to assist and were charged with judging with sovereign power cases of little importance or with ruling on more important disputes in the first instance. The members of the Supreme Court were not elected by the people or the legislature; the President of the United States had to choose them with the advice of the Senate.

In order to make them independent of the other powers, they were made irremovable, and it was decided that their salary, once fixed, would be beyond the control of the legislature.[26]

26. *The Union was divided into districts; in each*[*] *of these districts a federal judge was seated. The court where this judge presided was called the district court.*

In addition, each of the judges of the Supreme Court must travel annually over a certain part of the territory of the Republic, in order to decide certain more important cases on site; the court over which this magistrate presides was given the name circuit court.

It was easy enough to proclaim the establishment of a federal judicial system in principle, but a host of difficulties arose the moment its attributions had to be set.

Way of Determining the Jurisdiction[TN 5] of the Federal Courts

Difficulty of determining the jurisdiction of the various courts in confederations.—The courts of the Union given the right to determine their own jurisdiction.—Why this rule attacks the portion of sovereignty that the individual states reserved to themselves.—The sovereignty of these states limited by laws and

Finally, the most serious matters must come, either directly or on appeal, before the Supreme Court where all the judges of the circuit courts gather once each year to hold a formal session.

The jury system was introduced in federal courts, in the same way as in state courts, and in similar cases.

There is hardly any analogy at all, as you see, between the Supreme Court of the United States and our Cour de cassation. *The Supreme Court can be apprised of a case in the first instance, and the* Cour de cassation *can be only in the second or third instance.*[a] *The Supreme Court indeed forms, like the* Cour de cassation, *a single court charged with establishing a uniform jurisprudence; but the Supreme Court judges fact as well as law, and decides* itself, *without sending the matter to another court; two things that the* cour de cassation *cannot do.*

See the organic law of September 24, 1789, Laws of the United States, *by Story, vol. I, p. 53.*

[*]. "≠See, for the organization, the organic law of 1789, *Kent's Commentaries,* vol. I, p. 273 and following. *Sargent's* [*sic: Sergeant's*] *Constitutional Law.*≠"

a. In the manuscript: "only in the third instance."

Gustave de Beaumont:

> This is inexact. The *Cour de cassation* can be apprised of any judgment or decision made in the *last resort;* and many judgments are made in the last resort without having been appealed. Such are judgments about simple offenses, judgments of the justices of the peace not exceeding 50 francs; id. of courts of the first instance not exceeding 1,000 francs, etc. You must say in the *second or third instance* (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 28–29).

Translator's Note 5: *Compétence,* in relation to the courts, has a more narrowly legal, a more restricted meaning in French than *competence* would have in English; the English word *jurisdiction* is closer to the meaning.

by the interpretation of laws.—The individual states thus risk a danger more apparent than real.

A first question arose. The Constitution of the United States set up, face to face, two distinct sovereignties, represented in terms of judicial structure by two different court systems; no matter what care was taken to establish the jurisdiction of each of these two court systems, you could not prevent frequent conflicts between them. Now, in this case, who would have the right to establish jurisdiction?

Among peoples who form only one and the same political society, when a question of jurisdiction arises between two courts, it is usually brought before a third that serves as arbiter.

This is easily done because, among these peoples, questions of judicial jurisdiction do not have any relation to questions of national sovereignty.

But above the highest court of an individual state and the highest court of the United States, it was impossible to establish any kind of court that was not either one or the other.

So one of these two courts had to be given the right to judge in its own case and to take or accept cognizance of the matter in dispute. This privilege could not be granted to the various courts of the states; that would have destroyed the sovereignty of the Union in fact, after having established it in law; for interpretation of the Constitution would soon have given back to the individual states the portion of independence that the terms of the Constitution took away from them.

By creating a federal court, the desire had been to remove from the courts of the states the right to settle, each in its own way, questions of national interest and, by doing so, to succeed in shaping a uniform body of jurisprudence for the interpretation of the laws of the Union. The goal would not have been reached at all if the courts of the individual states, while abstaining from judging cases considered federal, had been able to judge them by pretending that they were not federal.

The Supreme Court of the United States was therefore vested with the right to decide all questions of jurisdiction.[27]

27. *Moreover, to make the cases of jurisdiction less frequent, it was decided that, in a very*

That was the most dangerous blow brought against the sovereignty of the states. It thus found itself limited not only by the laws, but also by the interpretation of the laws; by a known limit and by another that was unknown; by a fixed rule and by an arbitrary one. It is true that the Constitution had set precise limits to federal sovereignty; but each time this sovereignty is in competition with that of the states, a federal court must decide.

The dangers, moreover, with which this way of proceeding seemed to menace the sovereignty of the states were not as great in reality as they appeared to be.

We will see further along that, in America, real strength resides more in the provincial governments than in the federal government. Federal judges sense the relative weakness of the power in whose name they act; and they are more likely to abandon a right of jurisdiction in cases where it is granted to them by law, than they are led to claim it illegally.

Different Cases of Jurisdiction

The matter and the person, bases of federal jurisdiction.—Proceedings against ambassadors,—against the Union,—against an individual state.—Judged by whom.—Proceedings that arise from the laws of the Union.—Why judged by the federal courts.—Proceedings relating to breach of contracts judged by the federal judicial system.—Consequence of this.

After having recognized the means to set federal jurisdiction, the lawmakers of the Union determined the cases in which that jurisdiction must be exercised.

large number of federal cases, the courts of the individual states would have the right to decide concurrently with the courts of the Union; but then the losing party would always have the right to appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. The Supreme Court of Virginia contested the right of the Supreme Court of the United States to hear an appeal of its decisions, but unsuccessfully. See Kent's Commentaries, *vol. I, pp. 300, 370, and following. See Story's* Commentaries, *p. 646, and the organic law of 1789,* Laws of the United States, *vol. I, p. 53.*

They acknowledged that there were certain litigants who could only be judged by the federal courts, no matter what the subject of the proceedings.

They then established that there were certain proceedings that could only be decided by these same courts, no matter what the qualification of the litigants.

So the person and the matter became the two bases of federal jurisdiction.

Ambassadors represent nations friendly to the Union; everything that involves ambassadors involves in a way the entire Union. When an ambassador is party to a legal proceeding, the proceeding becomes an affair that touches on the welfare of the nation; it is natural that a federal court decides.

The Union itself can be the subject of proceedings; in this case, it would have been contrary to reason as well as to the custom of nations, to bring it for judgment before courts representing a sovereignty other than its own. It is for the federal courts alone to decide.

When two individuals, belonging to two different states, have a legal proceeding, you cannot, without disadvantage, have them judged by the courts of one of the two states. It is safer to choose a court that cannot incite the suspicion of any of the parties, and the court that very naturally presents itself is that of the Union.

When the two litigants are no longer isolated individuals, but states, this reason for equity is joined by a political reason of the first order. Here the status of the litigants gives a national importance to all proceedings; the smallest litigious issue between two states involves the peace of the entire Union.[28]

Often the very nature of the proceedings must serve as a rule of juris-

28. *The Constitution says as well that the proceedings that can arise between a state and the citizens of another state will be under the jurisdiction of the federal courts. Soon the question arose of knowing if the Constitution meant all proceedings that can arise between a state and the citizens of another state, whether the ones or the others were* plaintiffs. *The Supreme Court decided affirmatively; but this decision alarmed the individual states who feared being brought despite themselves, for the slightest reason, before the federal court system. So an amendment was introduced to the Constitution, by virtue of which the judicial power of the Union could not extend to judging the cases that had been* initiated *against one of the United States by the citizens of another. See Story's* Commentaries, *p. 624.*

diction. Thus all questions that are related to maritime commerce must be settled by federal courts.[29]

The reason is easy to point out: nearly all these questions get into an estimation of the law of nations. From this perspective, they essentially involve the whole Union in relation to foreigners. Since the sea, moreover, does not fall into one judicial circumscription rather than another, only the national court system can have a claim on legal proceedings that have a maritime origin.

The Constitution has enclosed in a single category nearly all the proceedings that, by their nature, must be under the jurisdiction of the federal courts.

In this regard, the rule that it indicates is simple, but it comprises in itself alone a vast system of ideas and a multitude of facts.

The federal courts, it says, must judge all proceedings that *arise in the laws of the United States.*

Two examples will make the thought of the law-maker perfectly clear.

The Constitution forbids the states the right to make laws on the circulation of money; despite this prohibition, a state makes such a law. Interested parties refuse to obey it, understanding that it is contrary to the Constitution. The matter must be brought before a federal court, because the grounds for the case are drawn from the laws of the United States.

Congress establishes a tariff law. Difficulties arise over the understanding of this law. Again, the matter must be presented before the federal courts, because the cause for the proceeding is in the interpretation of a law of the United States.

This rule is in perfect agreement with the bases adopted for the federal Constitution.

The Union, as constituted in 1789, had, it is true, only a limited sovereignty, but the desire was that, within this circle, the Union formed only one and the same people.[30] Within this circle, it is sovereign. This point

29. *Example: all acts of piracy.*

30. *A few restrictions were certainly placed on this principle by introducing the individual states as independent powers in the Senate, and by having them vote separately in the House of Representatives in the case of election of the President; but these are exceptions. The opposite principle is the dominant one.*

set forth and accepted, all the rest becomes easy; for if you recognize that the United States, within the limits posed by their Constitution, form only one people, the rights belonging to all peoples must surely be granted to them.

Now, since the origin of societies, this point is agreed upon: each people has the right to have all questions relating to the enforcement of its own laws judged by its courts. But you answer: the Union is in the singular position that it forms one people only relative to certain matters; for all others, it is nothing. What is the result? At least for all the laws that relate to these matters, the Union has the rights that would be granted to complete sovereignty. The real point of difficulty is knowing what those matters are. This point settled (and we have seen above, while treating jurisdiction, how it was settled), no question truly speaking remains; for once you have established that a proceeding was federal, that is, came within the portion of sovereignty reserved to the Union by the Constitution, it naturally followed that a federal court alone would decide.

So whenever someone wants to attack the laws of the United States, or invoke them in self-defense, it is the federal courts that must be addressed.

Thus, the jurisdiction of the courts of the Union expands or contracts depending on whether the sovereignty of the Union itself expands or contracts.

We have seen that the principal aim of the law-makers of 1789 had been to divide sovereignty into two distinct portions. In one, they placed the direction of all the general interests of the Union; in the other, the direction of all the interests particular to some of its parts.

Their principal concern was to arm the federal government with enough power for it to be able to defend itself, within its sphere, against the encroachments of the individual states.

As for the latter, the general principal adopted was to leave them free in their sphere. Within that sphere, the central government can neither direct them nor even inspect their conduct.

I have indicated in the chapter on the division of powers that this last principle had not always been respected. There are certain laws that an individual state cannot enact, even though the laws apparently involve only that state.

When a state of the Union enacts a law of this nature, the citizens who are harmed by the execution of this law can appeal to the federal courts.[b]

Thus, the jurisdiction of the federal courts extends not only to all the proceedings that have their source in the laws of the Union, but also to all those that arise in the laws that the individual states have enacted unconstitutionally.

The states are forbidden to promulgate *ex post facto* laws in criminal matters; the man who is sentenced by virtue of a law of this type can appeal to the federal judicial system.

The Constitution also forbids the states to make laws that can destroy or alter rights acquired by virtue of a contract (*impairing the obligations* [*sic: obligation*] *of contracts*).[31]

From the moment when an individual believes that he sees a law of his state that harms a right of this type, he can refuse to obey and appeal to the federal justice system.[32]

b. "Other defect of federal jurisdiction. The federal courts can only be apprised by an individual interest. Now, what would happen if a state passed an unconstitutional act that harmed only the sovereignty of the Union? Nearly impossible case" (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 50–51).

31. *It is perfectly clear, says Mr. Story, p. 503, that every law that expands, contracts or changes in whatever way the intention of the parties, such as result from the stipulations contained in a contract, impairs this contract. In the same place, this same author carefully defines what federal jurisprudence understands by a contract. The definition is very broad. A concession made by a state to an individual and accepted by him is a contract, and cannot be taken away by the effect of a new law. A charter granted by the state to a company is a contract, and binds the state as well as the concessionary. The article of the Constitution that we are speaking about therefore assures the existence of a great portion of* vested rights, *but not all. I can very legitimately own a property without its having passed into my hands by a contract. Its possession is for me a vested right, and this right is not guaranteed by the federal constitution.*

32. *Here is a remarkable example cited by Mr. Story, p. 508. Darmouth [*Dartmouth (ed.)*] College, in New Hampshire, had been founded by virtue of a charter granted to certain individuals before the American Revolution. Its administrators formed, by virtue of this charter, a constituted body, or, following the American expression, a* corporation. *The legislature of New Hampshire believed it necessary to change the terms of the original charter and transferred to new administrators all the rights, privileges and immunities that resulted from this charter. The former administrators resisted and appealed to the federal court, which agreed to hear the case, understanding that, since the original charter was a true contract between the state and the concessionaries, the new law could not change the disposition of this charter without violating the vested rights of a contract and consequently violating article I, section X, of the Constitution of the United States.*

To me, this disposition seems to attack the sovereignty of the state more profoundly than all the rest.[c]

The rights granted to the federal government, for ends clearly national, are defined and easy to understand. Those that are indirectly conceded to it by the article that I have just cited are not easily felt, and their limits are not easily traced. There is, in fact, a multitude of political laws that act upon the existence of contracts, and that could therefore furnish grounds for encroachment by the central power.

The Federal Courts' Way of Proceeding

Natural weakness of the judicial system in confederations.—Efforts that law-makers must make to place, as much as possible, only isolated individuals and not states before the federal courts.—How the Americans succeeded in doing this.—Direct action of the federal courts on ordinary individuals.—Indirect attack against states that violate the laws of the Union.—The decision of the federal judicial system does not destroy provincial law; it enervates it.

I have made known the rights of the federal courts; it is no less important to know how they are exercised.

The irresistible strength of the judicial system, in countries where sovereignty is not divided, comes from the fact that, in those countries, the courts represent the entire nation in a contest with a single individual who has been struck by a judgment. To the idea of law is joined the idea of the force that supports the law.

But in countries where sovereignty is divided, it is not always so. There, the judicial system most often finds itself facing, not an isolated individual,

c. In a first version: "≠. . . than all the rest. But it is so difficult to calculate in advance the impact of laws, that it is not unusual to see the most numerous assemblies consecrate long discussions to uninteresting points, while an article that will lead to the most characteristic effect of the law is precisely the one that passes unnoticed and is revealed only by experience.≠"

but a fraction of the nation. Its moral power and its physical power are diminished as a result.

So in federal States, the judicial system is naturally weaker; and the one subject to trial, stronger.

The law-maker, in confederations, must constantly work to give the courts a position analogous to the one they occupy among peoples who have not divided sovereignty. In other words, his most constant efforts must strive toward having the federal judicial system represent the nation, and having the one subject to trial represent an individual interest.

A government, whatever its nature, needs to act on the governed in order to force them to give the government what it is owed; it needs to take action against them in order to defend itself from their attacks.

As for the direct action of the government on the governed, in order to force them to obey the law, the Constitution of the United States saw to it that the federal courts, acting in the name of these laws, never had any dealing except with individuals (and that was its highest achievement). In fact, since it had been declared that the confederation formed only one and the same people within the circle drawn by the Constitution, the government, created by this Constitution and acting within its limits, was, as a result, vested with all the rights of a national government, the principal one being to have its injunctions reach ordinary citizens without an intermediary. So when the Union levied a tax, for example, it did not have to apply to the states to collect it, but to each American citizen, according to his share. In turn, the federal judicial system charged with assuring the enforcement of this law of the Union, had to condemn not the recalcitrant State, but the taxpayer. Like the judicial system of other peoples, it found only an individual facing it.[d]

Note that here the Union itself has chosen its adversary. It has chosen a weak one; it is entirely natural that he succumbs.

But when the Union, instead of attacking, is reduced to defending itself, the difficulty increases. The Constitution recognizes the power of the states

d. In the margin: "≠In this, the judicial power only follows the laws of its nature which lead it to judge only on particular cases. Only a political court can break a legislative measure.≠"

to make laws. These laws can violate the rights of the Union. Here, necessarily, the Union finds itself in conflict with the sovereignty of the state that enacted the law. Nothing remains except to chose, from among the means of action, the least dangerous. This means was indicated in advance by the general principles that I stated before.[33]

You see that, in the case that I have just supposed, the Union would have been able to cite the state before a federal court that would have declared the law void; this would have followed the most natural course of ideas. But, in this way, the federal judicial system would have found itself directly facing a state, something it wanted to avoid as much as possible.

The Americans have thought that it was nearly impossible for a new law, in its execution, not to harm some individual interest.

It is on this individual interest that the authors of the federal constitution rely to attack a legislative measure about which the Union could complain. To this individual interest, they offer a protection.

A state sells lands to a company; one year later, a new law disposes of the same lands in another way, and thus violates the part of the Constitution which forbids changing rights vested by contract. When the one who bought by virtue of the new law presents himself in order to take possession, the owner, who holds his rights from the former law, brings an action before the courts of the Union and has the title of the new owner voided.[34] Therefore, in reality, the federal judicial system is grappling with the sovereignty of the state; but it attacks that sovereignty only indirectly and on an application of detail. It thus strikes the law in its consequences, not in its principle. It does not destroy the law; it enervates it.

A final hypothesis remained.

Each state formed a corporation that had a separate existence and separate civil laws; consequently, it could sue or be sued before the courts. A state could, for example, bring suit against another state.

In this case, it was no longer a matter for the Union of attacking a provincial law, but of judging a case in which a state was a participant. It was

33. *See the chapter entitled: "Of the Judicial Power in America [in the United States (ed.)]."*

34. *See* Kent's Commentaries, *vol. I, p. 387.*

a case like any other; only the status of the litigants was different. Here the danger noted at the beginning of this chapter still exists. But this time it cannot be avoided; it is inherent in the very essence of federal constitutions that they will always result in creating, in the midst of the nation, individuals powerful enough to make it difficult to use the judicial system against them.

Elevated Rank That the Supreme Court Occupies among the Great Powers of the State

No other people have constituted a judicial power as great as the Americans.—Extent of its attributions.—Its political influence.—The peace and the very existence of the Union depend on the wisdom of seven federal judges.

When, after examining the organization of the Supreme Court in detail, you come to consider all of the attributions that it has been given, you easily discover that never has a more immense judicial power been constituted among any people.

The Supreme Court is placed higher than any known court, both by the *nature* of its rights and by the *type* of those subject to trial.

In all the civilized nations of Europe, the government has always shown a great reluctance to allow the ordinary judicial system to decide questions that involve the government itself. This reluctance is naturally greater when the government is more absolute. As liberty increases, on the contrary, the circle of the attributions of the courts is always going to widen; but not one of the European nations has yet thought that every judicial question, of no matter what origin, could be left to judges of ordinary law.

In America, this theory has been put in practice. The Supreme Court of the United States is the one and only national court.

It is charged with the interpretation of laws and of treaties; questions relating to maritime trade, and all those generally relating to the law of nations, are exclusively within its competence. You can even say that its attributions are almost entirely political, although its constitution is entirely

judicial. Its unique purpose is to have the laws of the Union enforced. And the Union determines only the relations of the government with the governed and of the nation with foreigners; nearly all of the relations of citizens among themselves are governed by the sovereignty of the states.

To this first cause of importance, another still greater must be added. In the nations of Europe, only individuals are subject to trial before the courts; but you can say that the Supreme Court of the United States makes sovereigns appear before it. When the bailiff, climbing the steps of the court, comes to proclaim these few words: "The State of New York versus the State of Ohio," you feel that you are not within the realm of an ordinary court of justice. And when you consider that one of these litigants represents a million men, and the other, two million, you are astonished at the responsibility that weighs upon the seven judges whose decision is going to delight or sadden such a large number of their fellow citizens.

In the hands of seven federal judges rest unceasingly the peace, prosperity, the very existence of the Union. Without them, the Constitution is a dead letter. To them, the executive power appeals in order to resist the encroachments of the legislative body; the legislature, to defend itself against the undertakings of the executive power; the Union, to make the states obey; the states, to repulse the exaggerated pretensions of the Union; public interest against private interest; the spirit of conservation against democratic instability. Their power is immense; but it is a power of opinion. They are omnipotent as long as the people consent to obey the law; they can do nothing once the people scorn the law. Now, the power of opinion is the most difficult one to exercise, because it is impossible to know its limits exactly. Often it is as dangerous to fall short, as to go beyond those limits.

So the federal judges must be not only good citizens, learned and upright men, qualities necessary for all magistrates, but they must also be statesmen; they must know how to discern the spirit of the times, to brave the obstacles that can be overcome, and to change direction when the current threatens to carry away, with them, the sovereignty of the Union and the obedience due to its laws.

The President can fail without having the State suffer, because the President has only a limited duty. Congress can go astray without having the

Union perish, because above Congress resides the electoral body that can change the spirit of Congress by changing its members.

But if imprudent or corrupt men ever came to compose the Supreme Court, the confederation would have to fear anarchy or civil war.

But make no mistake; the root cause of the danger is not in the constitution of the court, but in the very nature of federal governments. We have seen that nowhere is it more necessary to constitute a strong judicial power than among confederated peoples, because nowhere are individual existences, which can struggle against the social body, greater and in better condition to resist the use of the physical force of the government.

Now, the more necessary it is that a power be strong, the more scope and independence it must be given. The more extensive and independent a power, the more dangerous is the abuse that can be made of it. So the origin of the evil is not in the very constitution of this power, but in the very constitution of the State that necessitates the existence of such a power.

How the Federal Constitution Is Superior to the State Constitutions

How the Constitution of the Union can be compared to those of the individual states.—The superiority of the federal Constitution must be attributed particularly to the wisdom of the federal law-makers.—The legislature of the Union less dependent on the people than those of the states.—The executive power freer in its sphere.—The judicial power less subject to the desires of the majority.—Practical consequences of this.—The federal law-makers have mitigated the dangers inherent in democratic government; the law-makers of the states have heightened these dangers.

The federal Constitution differs essentially from the constitutions of the states in the purpose that it intends, but it is highly similar in the means to achieve this purpose. The object of government is different, but the forms of government are the same. From this special point of view, they can usefully be compared.

I think that the federal Constitution is superior to all of the state constitutions. This superiority stems from several causes.

The present Constitution of the Union was formed only after those of most of the states; so the Union could profit from acquired experience.

You will be convinced, nonetheless, that this cause is only secondary, if you consider that, since the establishment of the federal Constitution, the American confederation has increased by eleven new states, and that these new states have nearly always exaggerated rather than mitigated the defects existing in the constitutions of their precursors.

The great cause of the superiority of the federal Constitution is in the very character of the law-makers.

At the time when it was formed, the ruin of the American confederation seemed imminent; it was obvious to all, so to speak. In this extremity, the people chose, perhaps not the men they loved most, but those they respected most.

I have already pointed out above that nearly all the law-makers of the Union had been remarkable by their enlightenment and more remarkable still by their patriotism.

They had all risen in the midst of a social crisis, during which the spirit of liberty had constantly to struggle against a strong and dominating authority. When the struggle ended, and while the excited passions of the crowd were, as usual, still fixed on combating dangers that for a long time no longer existed, these men had stopped; they had cast a calmer and more penetrating eye on their country; they had seen that a definitive revolution was accomplished, and that henceforth the perils that threatened the people could only arise from the abuses of liberty.[e] What they thought, they had the courage to say, because deep in their hearts they felt a sincere and passionate love for this very liberty; they dared to speak of limiting it, because they were certain of not wanting to destroy it.[35]

e. In the manuscript: "of their power {of their liberty}."

35. *In this period, the celebrated Alexander Hamilton, one of the most influential framers of the Constitution, was not afraid to publish the following in the* Federalist, *No. 71 [p. 307]. He said:*

Most of the constitutions of the states give a term of one year to the house of representatives and two years to the senate. In this way the members of the legislative body are tied constantly and in the closest way to the slightest desires of their constituents.

The law-makers of the Union thought that this extreme dependence of the legislature distorted the principal effects of the representative system, by placing in the people themselves not only the source of powers, but also the government.

They increased the length of the electoral mandate in order to allow the deputy greater use of his free will.

The federal Constitution, like the different constitutions of the states, divided the legislative body into two branches.

But in the states, these two parts of the legislature were composed of the same elements and followed the same mode of election. As a result, the

There are some," he said, "who would be inclined to regard the servile pliancy of the executive to a prevailing current, either in the community or in the legislature, as its best recommendation. But such men entertain very crude notions, as well of the purposes for which government was instituted, as of the true means by which the public happiness may be promoted.

The republican principle demands that the deliberate sense of the community should govern the conduct of those to whom they entrust the management of their affairs; but it does not require an unqualified complaisance to every sudden breeze of passion, or to every transient impulse which the people may receive from the arts of men, who flatter their prejudices to betray their interests.

It is a just observation that the people commonly intend *the* public good. *This often applies to their very errors. But their good sense would despise the adulator who should pretend that they always reason right about the* means *of promoting it. They know from experience that they sometimes err; and the wonder is that they so seldom err as they do, beset as they continually are by the wiles of parasites and sycophants, by the snares of the ambitious, the avaricious, the desperate, by the artifices of men who possess their confidence more than they deserve it, and of those who seek to possess rather than to deserve it.*

When occasions present themselves in which the interests of the people are at variance with their inclinations, it is the duty of the persons whom they have appointed to be the guardians of those interests to withstand the temporary delusion in order to give them time and opportunity for more cool and sedate reflection. Instances might be cited in which a conduct of this kind has saved the people from very fatal consequences of their own mistakes, and has procured lasting monuments of their gratitude to the men who had courage and magnanimity enough to serve them at the peril of their displeasure.

passions and will of the majority emerged as easily and found an organ and an instrument as rapidly in one as in the other of the houses. This gave a fierce and hasty character to the making of laws.

The federal Constitution also had the two houses come out of the votes of the people; but it varied the conditions of eligibility and the mode of election. So, if one of the two legislative branches did not represent interests different from those represented by the other, as in certain nations, at least it represented a higher wisdom.

To be a Senator you had to have reached a mature age; and a small assembly, itself already elected, was charged with the election.

Democracies are naturally led to concentrate all social force in the hands of the legislative body. The latter, being the power that comes most directly from the people, is also the one that most partakes of the omnipotence of the people.

So, in the legislative body, you notice an habitual tendency that leads it to gather all kinds of authority within itself.

This concentration of powers, at the same time that it singularly harms the good management of public affairs, establishes the despotism of the majority.

The law-makers of the states have frequently surrendered to these democratic instincts; those of the Union always fought courageously against them.

In the states, executive power is placed in the hands of a magistrate who appears to be placed alongside the legislature, but who, in reality, is only a blind agent and passive instrument of its will. From where would he draw his strength? In the length of his term in office? Generally, he is named for only one year. In his prerogatives? He has, so to speak, none at all. The legislature can reduce him to impotence by granting the execution of its laws to special committees drawn from its midst. If it wanted, it could, in a way, nullify him by taking away his salary.

The federal Constitution has concentrated all the rights of the executive power, as well as all of its responsibility, in a single man. It gave the President a four-year term; it assured him his salary during the entire length of his term in office; it created a group of supporters for him and armed him with a qualified veto. In a word, after carefully drawing the sphere of executive

power, it sought, within this sphere, to give the executive power as strong and as free a position as possible.

The judicial power, of all the powers, is the one that, in the state constitutions, remained least dependent on the legislative power.

Nonetheless, in all the states, the legislature retained the authority to set the salaries of judges, which necessarily subjected the former to immediate legislative influence.

In certain states, judges are appointed only for a time, which again removes a large part of their strength and freedom.

In others, legislative and judicial powers are entirely mixed. The Senate of New York, for example, serves as the highest court of the state for certain trials.

The federal Constitution has, on the contrary, carefully separated the judicial power from all the others. In addition, it made judges independent by declaring their salaries fixed and making their office irrevocable.

The practical consequences of these differences are easy to see. It is clear to all attentive observers that the affairs of the Union are conducted infinitely better than the particular affairs of any state.

The federal government is more just and more moderate in its action than the state governments. There is more wisdom in its views, more continuity and intelligent design in its projects, more skill, steadiness and firmness in the execution of its measures.

A few words suffice to summarize this chapter.

Two principal dangers menace the existence of democracies:

The complete subservience of the legislative power to the will of the electoral body.

The concentration, in the legislative power, of all the other powers of government.

The law-makers of the states favored the development of these dangers. The law-makers of the Union did what they could to make them less to be feared.

What Distinguishes the Federal Constitution of the United States of America from All Other Federal Constitutions

The American confederation outwardly resembles all confederations.—Its effects are different, however.—What causes that?—How this confederation stands apart from all others.—The American government is not a federal government, but an incomplete national government.[f]

The United States of America has not presented the first and only example of a confederation. Without mentioning antiquity, modern Europe has furnished several. Switzerland, the German Empire, the Dutch Republic have been or still are confederations.

When you study the constitutions of these different countries, you notice with surprise that the powers they confer on the federal government are more or less the same as those granted by the American Constitution to the government of the United States. Like the latter, they give the central power the right to make war or peace, the right to raise an army, to levy taxes, to provide for general needs and to regulate the common interests of the nation.

Among these different peoples, however, the federal government has almost always remained deficient and weak, while that of the Union conducts public affairs with vigor and ease.

Even more, the first American Union could not continue to exist because of the excessive weakness of its government. Yet this government, so weak,

f. In the margin: "Temporary alliance, *league.*
"Lasting alliance, confederation.
"Limited [v: incomplete] national government.
"Complete national government.
"The Union is not a confederation [v: federal government], but an incomplete national government."

had received rights as extensive as the federal government of today. You can even say that in certain respects its privileges were greater.[g]

So several new principles are found in the current Constitution of the United States that are not striking at first, but make their influence profoundly felt.

This Constitution, which at first sight you are tempted to confuse with previous federal constitutions, rests as a matter of fact on an entirely new theory that must stand out as a great discovery in the political science of today.

In all the confederations that have preceded the American confederation of 1789, peoples who combined for a common purpose agreed to obey the injunctions of a federal government; but they retained the right to command and to supervise the execution of the laws of the Union at home.

The American states that united in 1789 agreed not only that the federal government could dictate laws to them, but also that the federal government itself would execute its laws.

In the two cases, the right is the same; only the exercise of the right is different. But this single difference produces immense results. [Such is the power of laws over the fate of societies.][h]

In all the confederations that have preceded the American Union of today, the federal government, in order to provide for its needs, applied to the individual governments. In the case where the prescribed measure displeased one of them, the latter could always elude the need to obey. If it was strong it appealed to arms; if it was weak, it tolerated a resistance to the laws of the Union that had become its own, pretended weakness and resorted to the power of inertia.

Consequently, one of these two things has constantly happened: the

g. "The old constitution gave Congress great power to command the different states (illegible word) in order to compel them other than by war. It established a *league* among independent states, not a *federal government*" (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 47).

h. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I believe that this paragraph could be deleted. It develops an idea that springs from what precedes and comes naturally to the mind of the reader. By removing it, the pace will be faster. Be careful about slowing the pace by reflections, when they are not absolutely necessary. The last sentence of the paragraph is a useless commonplace" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 22).

most powerful of the united peoples, taking hold of the rights of the federal authority, has dominated all the others in its name;[36] or the federal government has been left to its own forces. Then anarchy has become established among the confederated peoples, and the Union has fallen into impotence.[37]

In America, the Union governs not the states, but ordinary citizens. When it wants to levy a tax, it does not apply to the government of Massachusetts, but to each inhabitant of Massachusetts. Former federal governments faced peoples; the Union faces individuals. It does not borrow its strength, but draws upon its own. It has its own administrators, courts, officers of the law, and army.

Certainly the national [*sic:* state] spirit, collective passions, provincial prejudices of each state still strongly tend to diminish the extent of federal power so constituted, and to create centers of resistance to the will of the federal power. Limited in its sovereignty, it cannot be as strong as a government that possesses complete sovereignty; but that is an evil inherent in the federal system.

In America, each state has far fewer opportunities and temptations to resist; and if the thought occurs, the state can act on it only by openly violating the laws of the Union, by interrupting the ordinary course of justice, and by raising the standard of revolt. In a word, it must suddenly take an extreme position, something men hesitate to do for a long time.

In former confederations, the rights granted to the Union were causes of war rather than of power, since these rights multiplied its demands without augmenting its means of enforcing obedience. Consequently, the real weakness of federal governments has almost always been seen to grow in direct proportion to their nominal power.

36. *This is what was seen among the Greeks under Philip, when this prince took charge of enforcing the decree of the Amphictyons. This is what happened to the republic of the Netherlands, where the province of Holland has always made the law. The same thing is still going on today among the Germans. Austria and Prussia are the agents of the Diet and, in its name, dominate the entire confederation.*

37. *It has always been so for the Swiss confederation.—Were it not for the jealousy of its neighbors, Switzerland, for several centuries, would no longer exist.*

This is not so for the American Union; the federal government, like most ordinary governments, can do everything that it has the right to do.

The human mind invents things more easily than words; this is what causes the use of so many incorrect terms and incomplete expressions.[j]

Several nations form a permanent league and establish a supreme authority that, without acting on ordinary citizens as a national government could, nonetheless acts on each of the confederated peoples, taken as a group.

This government, so different from all the others, is given the name federal.

Next, a form of society is found in which several peoples truly blend together as one for certain common interests, and remain separate and only confederated for all the others.

Here the central power acts without intermediary on the governed, administering and judging them as national governments do, but it acts this way only within a limited circle. Clearly that is no longer a federal government; it is an incomplete national government. So a form of government, neither precisely national nor federal, is found. But here things have stopped, and the new word needed to express the new thing does not yet exist.[k]

Because this new type of confederation was unknown, all unions have arrived at civil war, or slavery, or inertia. The peoples who composed them have all lacked either the enlightenment to see the remedy to their ills, or the courage to apply them.

j. Hervé de Tocqueville: "In my opinion, this paragraph and the four following must be deleted and replaced by one or two sentences. It is long and a bit heavy; its importance does not justify its defects. I therefore advise pruning the grammatical discussion and quickly going straight to the paragraph: *Because this new type of confederation was unknown . . .*"

Édouard de Tocqueville: "I cannot share this opinion. This reflection seems very profound to me. Moreover, if you went to the paragraph beginning *Because this new type . . .*, it would have absolutely no sense, since it relates only to the deleted paragraph" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 22).

k. In the margin: "≠The thing is new [v: other], but an old word is still needed to designate it.≠"

The first American Union had also lapsed into the same faults.

But in America, the confederated states, before achieving independence, had been part of the same empire for a long time; so they had not yet contracted the habit of complete self-government, and national prejudices had not been able to become deeply rooted. Better informed than the rest of the world, they were equal to each other in enlightenment; they only weakly felt the passions that ordinarily, among peoples, resist the extension of federal power; and these passions were fought against by the greatest citizens. The Americans, at the same time that they felt the evil, resolutely envisaged the remedy. They corrected their laws and saved the country.

Of the Advantages of the Federal System in General, and of Its Special Utility for America[m]

Happiness and liberty that small nations enjoy.—Power of large nations.—Large empires favor the developments of civilization.—That strength is often the first element of prosperity for nations.—The purpose of federal systems is to combine the advantages that peoples gain from the largeness and the smallness of their territory.—Advantages that the United States derives from this system.—The law yields to the needs of the populations; the populations do not yield to the necessities of the law.—Activity, progress, taste for and practice of liberty among the American peoples.—The public spirit of the Union is only the sum of provincial patriotism.—Things and ideas circulate freely within the territory of the United States.—The Union is free and happy, like a small nation; respected, like a large one.

Among small nations, society keeps its eye on everything; the spirit of improvement gets down to the smallest details. Since the weakness of the people profoundly tempers their ambition, their efforts and resources are

m. In the margin: "Perhaps this chapter should be shifted to the place where I will talk about the future of the Union."

almost entirely focused on their internal well-being and are not likely to be wasted on the empty illusion of glory. Since the capacities of each one are generally limited, desires are limited as well. The mediocrity of wealth makes conditions nearly equal; and mores have a simple and peaceful air. Thus, considering everything and taking into account various degrees of morality and enlightenment, more comfort, population and tranquillity are usually found in small nations than in large ones.

When tyranny establishes itself within a small nation, it is more troublesome than anywhere else; acting inside a smaller circle, it extends to everything within this circle. Unable to undertake some great objective, it is busy with a multitude of small ones; it appears both violent and meddlesome. From the political world, which is strictly speaking its domain, it penetrates into private life. After dictating actions, it aspires to dictate tastes; after governing the State, it wishes to govern families. But that rarely happens; as a matter of fact, liberty forms the natural condition of small societies. There, government offers too little attraction to ambition, and the resources of individuals are too limited, for sovereign power to be easily concentrated in the hands of one man.[n] Should it happen, it is not difficult for the governed to unite together and, by a common effort, to overthrow the tyrant and the tyranny at the same time. [≠Liberty is, moreover, something so natural and so easy within a small nation that abuse can hardly be brought about.≠]

So small nations have at all times been the cradle of political liberty. It has happened that most of them have lost this liberty by growing larger, which clearly reveals that liberty is due to the small size of a people and not to the people themselves.

The history of the world provides no example of a large nation that remained a republic for long;[38] this has led men to say that the thing was impractical. As for me, I think that it is very imprudent for man to want to limit the possible and to judge the future; the real and the present elude

n. In the margin: "≠The power of one man easily succeeds in putting itself above the law and the interest of all.≠"

38. *I am not speaking here about a confederation of small republics, but of a large consolidated republic.*

him every day, and he finds himself constantly surprised by the unexpected in the things he knows best. What can be said with certainty is that the existence of a large republic will always be infinitely more at risk than that of a small one.[o]

All the passions fatal to republics grow with the extent of the territory, while the virtues that serve to support them do not increase in the same measure.[p]

The ambition of individuals increases with the power of the State; the strength of parties, with the importance of the end that they have in mind; but love of country, which must combat these destructive passions, is not stronger in a vast republic than in a small one. It would even be easy to prove that love of country there is less developed and less powerful. Great riches and profound poverty, large cities, depravity of mores, individual egoism, complexity of interests are so many perils that almost always result from the large size of the State. Several of these things do not harm the existence of a monarchy; some can even work toward its duration. In monarchies, moreover, government has a strength of its own; it makes use of the people and does not depend on them; the more numerous the people, the stronger the prince. But to these dangers, republican government can oppose only the support of the majority. Now, this element of strength is not proportionately more powerful in a vast republic than in a small one. Thus, while the means of attack constantly increase in number and power, the strength of resistance remains the same. It can even be said that it decreases, for the more numerous the people and the more varied the nature

o. "I suspect that this doctrine that presents small States to us as the only ones that are suitable for republican forms will be refuted by experience. Perhaps it will be recognized that in order to establish a republic in which justice reigns, the republic must be large enough so that local egoism is never able to harm the whole, nor corrupt the major part of those who lead it; so that on every question you will always be sure to find in the councils a majority free of particular interests and capable of making solely the principles of justice prevail."

Jefferson to Davernois [d'Ivernois (ed.)], 6 February 1795. (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 2). Citation from Louis P. Conseil, editor. *Mélanges politiques et philosophiques extraits des mémoires et de la correspondance de Thomas Jefferson* (Paris: Paulin, 1833), vol. I, pp. 407–9.

p. The wording of this sentence comes from Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 34).

of minds and interests, the more difficult it is, as a result, to form a compact majority.

[≠Republican government is fragile by nature. It lasts much more because of the weakness of the attacks directed against it than because of a strength of its own [v: its own power]. It relies only on a certain sentiment of order, virtue and moderation on the part of the governed. The immoderate desires of parties, great riches and great poverty, vast cities, and the profound corruption of mores that they engender, constantly threaten the existence of republics. Now, all of these things are found only among large nations alone. A government that has the source of its power outside of the people can continue to exist for a long time, whatever the opinions of the people; but a republican government has strength only in the support of the majority; the more numerous the people, the harder to form a majority. Here my reasoning is based only upon a numerical calculation.≠]

We have been able to note, moreover, that human passions acquired intensity, not only from the greatness of the end that they wanted to attain, but also from the multitude of individuals who felt them at the same time. There is no one who does not find himself more moved in the middle of an agitated crowd that shares his emotion than if he were to feel it alone. In a large republic, political passions become irresistible, not only because the objective that they pursue is immense, but also because millions of men experience those political passions in the same way and at the same moment.

So it is permissible to say that, in general, nothing is so contrary to the well-being and to the liberty of men as large empires.

Large States have particular advantages, however, that must be recognized.

In them, the desire for power is more passionate among common men than elsewhere. So too the love of glory there is more developed among certain souls who find in the applause of a great people an objective that is worthy of their efforts and appropriate for raising them, in a way, above themselves. There, thought in all fields is given a more rapid and powerful impetus; ideas circulate more freely; large cities are like vast intellectual centers where all the lights of the human mind come to shine and combine.

This fact explains for us why large nations bring more rapid progress to enlightenment and to the general cause of civilization than small ones.[q] It must be added that important discoveries often require a development of national strength of which the government of a small people is incapable; among large nations, the government has a greater number of general ideas; it is more completely free from the routine of antecedents and from local egoism. There is more genius in its conceptions, more boldness in its ways of doing things.

Internal well-being is more complete and more widespread among small nations as long as they remain at peace; but a state of war is more harmful to them than it is to large nations. In the latter, great distance from the borders sometimes allows most people to remain far from danger for centuries. For them, war is more a cause of discomfort than of ruin. [≠Large nations are at war more than small ones, but all things considered, among the large ones, there are more men at peace.≠]

Moreover, in this matter as in many others, there is a consideration that predominates over all the rest: that of necessity.

If there were only small nations and not any large ones, humanity would certainly be freer and happier; but the existence of large nations cannot be avoided.

This introduces into the world a new element of national prosperity, which is strength. What good is it for a people to present a picture of comfort and liberty, if they are exposed each day to devastation or conquest? What good is it that they have manufacturing and commerce, if another people commands the seas and establishes the law for all markets? Small nations are often miserable, not because they are small, but because they are weak; large nations prosper, not because they are large, but because they are strong. So for nations, strength is often one of the first conditions of happiness and even of existence. Because of that, barring particular circumstances, small peoples always end up being violently united with large ones or uniting with them on their own. I know of no condition more deplorable than that of a people able neither to defend itself nor to be self-sufficient.

q. This sentence and the preceding one have been corrected by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 34–35).

The federal system has been created to unite the various advantages that result from the large and the small sizes of nations.[r]

It is enough to look at the United States of America to see all the good that comes to those who adopt this system.

Among large centralized nations, the legislator is forced to give laws a uniform character that does not allow for the diversity of places and mores; never learning about individual cases, he can only proceed by general rules. Men are then obliged to bend to the necessity of legislation, for legislation cannot adapt to the needs and mores of men; this is a great cause of trouble and misery.[s]

This disadvantage does not exist in confederations. The congress regulates the principal actions of social existence; all the detail is left to the provincial legislatures.

You cannot imagine to what degree this division of sovereignty serves the well-being of each of the states that compose the Union. In these small societies, not preoccupied by the need to defend themselves or to expand, all public power and all individual energy are turned toward internal improvements.[t] The central government of each state, situated close to the governed, is alerted daily to needs that make themselves felt. Consequently, each year new plans are presented; these plans, discussed in town assemblies or the state legislature and then reproduced in the press, excite universal

r. Rousseau made the following recommendation to the Poles: "Apply yourselves to expanding and perfecting the system of federative governments, the only one that unites the advantages of large and small States" (*Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne,* chapter V, in *Œuvres complètes,* III, Paris: Pléiade, 1964, p. 971). The same idea is set forth at the beginning of *Jugement sur le projet de paix perpétuelle,* and it appears in a note at the end of chapter XV of book III of the *Contrat social* (*ibid.,* p. 431). The advantages of the federal form had been equally praised by Montesquieu in the first chapter of book IX of *Esprit des lois* (in *Oeuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1951, II, p. 369).

s. Cf. conversation with Mr. Bowring (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 35).

t. "≠Nevertheless, the greatest difficulty is not to find some peoples who know how to manage their own affairs, but to find some with this habit who can understand federal sovereignty and submit to it≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 4).

interest and the zeal of the citizens. This need to improve agitates the American republic constantly and does not trouble them; there, ambition for power is replaced by the love of well-being, a more vulgar, but less dangerous passion. It is an opinion generally shared in America that the existence and duration of republican forms in the New World depend on the existence and the duration of the federal system. A great part of the miseries engulfing the new States of South America is attributed to the desire to establish large republics there, instead of dividing sovereignty.[u]

As a matter of fact, it is incontestable that in the United States the taste and the practice of republican government were born in the towns and within the provincial assemblies. In a small nation such as Connecticut,[v] for example, where the important political matter is opening a canal or laying out a roadway, where the state has no army to pay nor war to sustain, and where the state can give to those who lead it neither wealth nor much glory, you can imagine nothing more natural and more appropriate to the nature of things than a republic. Now, this same republican spirit, these mores and these habits of a free people, after being born and developing in the various states, are then applied easily to the whole country. In a way, the public spirit of the Union is itself only a summary of provincial patriotism. Each citizen of the United States transfers, so to speak, the interest inspired in him by his small republic to the love of the common native land. By defending the Union, he defends the growing prosperity of his district, the right to direct its affairs, and the hope of winning acceptance there for the plans for improvement that are to enrich him himself: all things that ordinarily touch men more than the general interests of the country and the glory of the nation.

u. Hervé de Tocqueville: "All that precedes is very good. A thought however: Isn't the well-being that, for the states of the Union, results from the division of sovereignty disturbed by the vices of their democratic organization that Alexis had pointed out?"

Édouard de Tocqueville: "It seems to me that this can only be related to the whole. It is certain that the United States, as they are constituted, enjoy an enormous prosperity, and that the nations of the South are in anarchy" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 24).

v. In the first version, the state cited was Massachusetts.

On the other hand, if the spirit and the mores of the inhabitants make them more suitable than others to cause a large republic to prosper, the federal system has made the task much less difficult. The confederation of all the American states does not show the usual disadvantages of numerous human agglomerations. The Union is a large republic in terms of expanse; but in a way, it can be likened to a small republic, because of the small number of matters that concern its government. Its acts are important, but rare. Since the sovereignty of the Union is hindered and incomplete, the use of this sovereignty is not dangerous to liberty. Nor does it excite those immoderate desires for power and reputation that are so deadly to great republics. Since everything there does not necessarily end up at a common center, you see neither vast cities,[w] nor enormous wealth, nor great poverty, nor sudden revolutions. Political passions, instead of spreading instantaneously like a firestorm over the whole surface of the country, are going to break against the individual passions and interests of each state.

Within the Union, however, ideas and things circulate freely, as among one and the same people. Nothing stops the rise of the spirit of enterprise. Its government draws upon talents and enlightenment. Within the boundaries of the Union, as within the interior of a country under the same empire, a profound peace reigns. Outside, the Union ranks among the most powerful nations of the world; it offers to foreign trade more than eight hundred leagues of coastline. Holding in its hands the keys to a whole world, it enforces respect for its flag in the far reaches of the seas.[x]

w. Hervé de Tocqueville: "And New York which is so large?

Édouard de Tocqueville: "New York, it seems to me, is only a large city and not a metropolis, in the true meaning of this word" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 24).

x. Hervé de Tocqueville: "This peroration is beautiful, but isn't Alexis making America into too much of an El Dorado? It must not be forgotten that he thinks himself obliged to disenchant us in the following chapters. Two sentences here appear too strong to me: that of the profound peace that reigns within the interior—two recent examples have shown that this peace is easily troubled—and that of respect for the flag, which exists only because the European nations wish it or do not agree to humiliate it. Not with its small fleet would America force the maritime powers to respect its flag."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Alexis shows in several places what the future dangers of the American government are, and what its weak side is at the present time. But, if one judges it now as a whole, one can say, as in the last sentence, *'The Union is free and happy,* etc.'" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 24–25).

The Union is free and happy like a small nation, glorious and strong like a large one.[y]

What Keeps the Federal System from Being within the Reach of All Peoples; And What Has Allowed the Anglo-Americans to Adopt It

There are, in all federal systems, inherent vices that the law-maker cannot fight.—Complication of all federal systems.—It requires from the governed the daily use of their intelligence.—Practical knowledge of the Americans in the matter of government.—Relative weakness of the government of the Union, another vice inherent in the federal system.—The Americans have made it less serious, but have not been able to destroy it.—The sovereignty of the individual states weaker in appearance, stronger in reality than that of the Union.—Why.—So among confederated peoples, there must be natural causes of union, apart from the laws.—What these causes are among the Anglo-Americans.—Maine and Georgia, 400 leagues apart, more naturally united than Normandy and Brittany.—That war is the principal danger to confederations.—This proved by the very example of the United States.—The Union has no great wars to fear.—Why.—Dangers that the peoples of Europe would run by adopting the federal system of the Americans.

[Of all beings, man is assuredly the one best known; and yet his prosperity or miseries are the product of unknown laws of which only a few isolated and incomplete fragments come into our view. Absolute truth is hidden and perhaps will always remain hidden.] The law-maker sometimes succeeds, after a thousand efforts, in exercising an indirect influence on the destiny of nations, and then his genius is celebrated. While often, the geo-

y. See the conversation with Mr. MacLean (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 127).

graphic position of the country, over which he has no influence; a social state that was created without his support; mores and ideas, whose origin is unknown to him; a point of departure that he does not know, impart to society irresistible movements that he struggles against in vain and that carry him along as well.

The law-maker resembles a man who plots his route in the middle of the sea. He too can navigate the ship that carries him, but he cannot change its structure, raise the wind, or prevent the ocean from heaving under his feet.

I have shown what advantages the Americans gain from the federal system. It remains for me to explain what allowed them to adopt this system; for not all peoples are able to enjoy its benefits.

Accidental vices arising from the laws are found in the federal system; these can be corrected by law-makers. Others are encountered that are inherent in the system; these could not be destroyed by the peoples who adopt it. So these peoples must find within themselves the strength to withstand the natural imperfections of their government.

Among the vices inherent to all federal systems, the most visible of all is the complication of means that they use. This system necessarily brings two sovereignties face to face. The law-maker succeeds in making the movements of these two sovereignties as simple and as equal as possible, and he can enclose both of them within clearly defined spheres of action. But he cannot make it so that there is only one of them, nor prevent them from being in contact at some point.

[The federal system of the United States consists of combining two governments: one, provincial; the other, national.

It is already not so easy to find a people who have the taste and, above all, the habit of provincial government. I have already remarked earlier that, among enterprises that can be attempted, certainly one of the most difficult was to persuade men to attend to their own affairs. It follows that the federal system is hardly ever established except among nations who, independent of one another for a long time, have naturally contracted this taste and these habits to a high degree. Notably, this is what happened in the United States. Before the Revolution, they all recognized the authority of the mother country, but each of them had its individual government as well and did not depend on its neighbor.

Nonetheless, the great difficulty is not finding some peoples who know how to run their own affairs, but finding some who can understand federal sovereignty and submit to it.]

So no matter what is done, the federal system rests on a complicated theory whose application requires, in the governed, the daily use of the light of their reason.[z]

In general, only simple conceptions take hold of the mind of the people. An idea that is false, but clear and precise, will always have more power in the world than a true, but complicated, idea. It follows that parties, which are like small nations within a large one, are always quick to adopt, as a symbol, a name or a principle that often represents only very incompletely the end that they propose and the means that they employ. But without this symbol, they would be able neither to subsist nor to stir. Governments that rest only on a single idea or single sentiment, easy to define, are perhaps not the best, but they are assuredly the strongest and the most durable.

On the contrary, when you examine the Constitution of the United States, the most perfect of all known federal constitutions, you are alarmed by the many varieties of knowledge and by the discernment that it assumes among those whom it must govern. The government of the Union rests almost entirely on legal fictions. The Union is an ideal nation that exists only in the mind so to speak; intelligence alone reveals its extent and its limits.

Once the general theory is well understood, the difficulties of application remain; they are innumerable, for the sovereignty of the Union is so entangled with the sovereignty of the states that it is impossible at first

z. In the fourth lecture of his course on civilization in Europe, Guizot insisted on this point:

> The federative system, logically the most simple, is in fact the most complex; in order to reconcile the degree of independence, of local liberty, that it allows, with the degree of general order, of general submission that it requires and assumes in certain cases, a very advanced civilization is clearly required. . . . The federative system is therefore the one that clearly requires the greatest development of reason, of morality, of civilization, in the society to which it applies (*Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe,* Brussels, Société belge de Librairie, 1839, lesson IV, p. 41).

glance to perceive their limits. Everything is by convention and by artifice in such a government, and it can only suit a people accustomed, for a long time, to running their own affairs, a people among whom political knowledge has penetrated to the lowest levels of society. I have never admired the good sense and practical intelligence of the Americans more than in the way in which they escape the innumerable difficulties that arise from their federal constitution. I almost never met a common man in America who did not, with surprising ease, discriminate between the obligations arising from the laws of Congress and those originating in the laws of his state, and who, after distinguishing the matters that were among the general attributions of the Union from those that the local legislature had to regulate, could not indicate the point at which the jurisdiction of the federal courts began and the limit at which that of the state courts ended.

The Constitution of the United States resembles those beautiful creations of human industry that shower glory and wealth on those who invent them, but that remain sterile in other hands.

This is what Mexico has demonstrated in our times.

The inhabitants of Mexico, wanting to establish the federal system, took as a model and almost completely copied the federal constitution of the Anglo-Americans, their neighbors.[39] But while importing the letter of the law, they could not at the same time import the spirit that gives it life. So they are seen constantly encumbered by the mechanism of their double government. The sovereignty of the states and that of the Union, leaving the circle that the constitution had drawn, penetrate each other daily. Still today, Mexico is constantly dragged from anarchy to military despotism, and from military despotism to anarchy.

[But even if a people were advanced enough in civilization and versed enough in the art of government to submit intelligently to so complicated a political theory, it would still not mean that the federal system could meet all their needs.

There is, in fact, a vice inherent in this system that will manifest itself no matter what is done. That is the relative weakness of the government of the Union.]

39. *See the Mexican constitution of 1824.*

The second and more destructive of all the vices, which I regard as inherent in the federal system itself, is the relative weakness of the government of the Union.

The principle on which all confederations rest is the division of sovereignty. Law-makers make this division hardly noticeable; they even hide it from view for awhile, but they cannot keep it from existing. Now, divided sovereignty will always be weaker than complete sovereignty.

In the account of the Constitution of the United States, we saw how artfully the Americans, while enclosing the power of the Union within the limited circle of federal governments, succeeded in giving it the appearance and, to a certain extent, the strength of a national government.

By acting in this way, the law-makers of the Union reduced the natural danger of confederations; but they were not able to make it disappear entirely.

The American government, it is said, does not address itself to the states; it applies its injunctions directly to the citizens and bends them, separately, to the work of the common will.

But if federal law collided with the interests and prejudices of a state, should it not be feared that each of the citizens of this state would believe himself interested in the cause of the man who refuses to obey? When all the citizens of the state found themselves thus harmed at the same time and in the same way by the authority of the Union, the federal government would seek in vain to isolate them in order to combat them. They would instinctively feel that they must unite to defend themselves, and in the portion of sovereignty left for their state to enjoy, they would find an organization already prepared. Fiction would then disappear and give way to reality, and you would be able to see the organized power of one part of the territory joining battle with the central authority.

[This is, moreover, the spectacle most recently presented by South Carolina. The regulations of the United States concerning the tariff had become completely unpopular in Carolina; the state legislature took the initiative and suspended the enforcement of the federal law. This result is inevitable. When the interest or passions of men are left a powerful means of satisfaction, you can be assured that legal fictions will not long prevent them from noticing and making use of that means. ≠This is so well understood

even in America that, no matter how large certain states already are, care has been taken not to create district assemblies that could represent a collective resistance. The legislature never has to make anything obey, other than towns, without links to each other.≠

Former federal constitutions obliged the states to *act.* The Constitution of the United States only obliges them to *allow action,* an essential difference that makes resistance very rare; for it is very much easier to refuse to act than to prevent someone else from acting. But once what you resolved simply to endure reaches a certain level of pain, the reluctance that men have to take initiative does not take long to disappear, and the precaution of the law-maker is found wanting.

The principle of federal law is that the Court of the United States must endeavor to judge only individuals. In this way, it does [not (ed.)] generally attack the laws of the states, which reduces the danger of a collision between the two sovereignties. But if, in a particular interest, it violates an important state law, or harms a general state principle or interest, the precautions of the law-maker are again useless; and the struggle, real if not obvious, is between the harmed state, represented by a citizen, and the Union, represented by its courts. The Constitution gives the Union . . . [text of note 40 (ed.)].

It is enough, moreover, to see in what a persuading and conciliatory manner the federal government calls for the execution of laws, in order to judge that, despite appearances and the efforts of the law-maker, the federal government constantly finds itself facing not individuals, but sovereigns.

It is even easy to go further, and it must be said with the famous Hamilton in the *Federalist* that of the two sovereignties, the stronger is assuredly the sovereignty of the state.

You can even go further . . . [cf. infra (ed.)] . . .]

I will say as much about the federal judicial system. If, in a particular trial, the courts of the Union violated an important state law, the real, if not obvious, struggle would be between the harmed state, represented by a citizen, and the Union, represented by its courts.[40]

40. *Example: The Constitution gave the Union the right to have unoccupied lands sold for its benefit. I suppose that Ohio claims this same right for those that are enclosed within its*

You must have little experience in the ways of this world to imagine that, after leaving the passions of men a means of satisfaction, you will always prevent them, with the aid of legal fictions, from noticing and making use of that means.

So the American law-makers, while making the struggle between the sovereignties less probable, did not destroy the causes.

You can even go further and say that they were not able to secure preponderance to the federal power in case of conflict.[a]

They gave the Union money and soldiers, but the states retain the love and the prejudices of the people.

The sovereignty of the Union is an abstract thing connected to only a small number of external matters. The sovereignty of the states is felt by all the senses; it is understood without difficulty; every moment, it is seen in action. One is new; the other was born with the people themselves.

The sovereignty of the Union is a work of art. The sovereignty of the states is natural; it exists by itself, without effort, like the authority of the father of a family.

The sovereignty of the Union touches men only through a few general interests; it represents an immense and distant country, a vague and indefinite sentiment. The sovereignty of the states envelops each citizen in a way and catches him every day by details. It is the state that takes responsibility

borders, under the pretext that the Constitution only meant territory not yet submitted to the jurisdiction of any state; and that consequently Ohio itself wanted to sell the lands. The judicial question would be posed, it is true, between the buyers who held their title from the Union and the buyers who held their title from the state, and not between the Union and Ohio. But if the court of the United States ruled that the federal buyer was in possession, and the courts of Ohio maintained the holdings of his competitor, then what would become of the legal fiction?

a. With a bracket that goes from this paragraph to the one that ends with the words "that carry them toward peace":

To note.

I say the same thing with more development in the last chapter on the future. Ask for advice?"

Hervé de Tocqueville: "Do not put it here. One can do without it."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "The more I reread the passage, the more I regret that there is a question of deleting it, even more because I have not read the one that it repeats" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 25).

for guaranteeing his prosperity, his liberty, his life; at every moment, it influences his well-being or his misery. The sovereignty of the states rests on memories, on habits, on local prejudices, on the egoism of province and of family; in a word, on all the things that make the instinct for native land so powerful in the heart of man. How can its advantages be doubted?

Since the law-makers cannot prevent the occurrence of dangerous collisions between the two sovereignties that are brought face to face by the federal system, their efforts to turn confederated peoples away from war must be joined with particular dispositions that carry them toward peace.

It follows that the federal pact cannot exist for long if, among the peoples to whom it applies, a certain number of conditions for union are not found that make this common life easy for them and facilitate the task of government.

Thus, to succeed, the federal system needs not only good laws, but also favorable circumstances.

All peoples who have been seen to form a confederation have had a certain number of common interests that serve as the intellectual bonds of the association.

But beyond material interests, man still has ideas and sentiments. For a confederation to last for a long time, there must be no less homogeneity in the civilization than in the needs of the diverse peoples who constitute it. The civilization of a *canton* in Vaud compared with that of a *canton* in Uri is like the XIXth century compared with the XVth; so Switzerland has never truly had a federal government. The union among the different *cantons* exists only on the map; and that would be clearly seen if a central authority wanted to apply the same laws over the whole territory.[b]

b. Before the 1836 visit, Tocqueville probably went to Switzerland in 1829 and 1832 (Cf. Luc Monnier, "Tocqueville et la Suisse," in *Alexis de Tocqueville. Livre du centenaire,* Paris: Editions du C.N.R.S., 1960, pp. 101–13).

André Jardin indicates that in his view Tocqueville must have visited Switzerland at least five times between 1823 and 1836. The notes of the voyage to Switzerland in 1836 are known to us thanks to the text published in the *Oeuvres complètes,* Beaumont edition. André Jardin ("Tocqueville et la décentralisation," in *La décentralisation, VI colloque d'histoire,* Aix-en-Provence: Publication des Annales de la Faculté des Lettres, 1961, pp. 89–117, 97) has nonetheless remarked that certain similarities between these notes

[There are men who pretend that one of the advantages of federal constitutions is to allow each portion of the same empire to live entirely in its own way, without ceasing to be united. That is true, if confederation means a kind of offensive and defensive league, by means of which different peoples unite to repel a common danger and remain strangers to each other for everything else. But if, among confederated peoples, you want to create a common existence and a true national government, it is absolutely necessary that their civilization be homogeneous in nature. This necessity makes itself felt even much more in confederations than in monarchies, because in order to be obeyed, government has much more need for the support of the governed in the first than in the second.

The federal system allows and favors diversity in laws dealing with specifics, which is a great good; but it often resists uniformity in general laws, which is a great evil.]

In the United States there is a fact that admirably facilitates the existence of the federal government. The different states not only have more or less the same interests, the same origin and the same language, but also the same degree of civilization; this almost always makes agreement among them easy. I do not know if there exists any European nation, however small, that, in its different parts, does not present a less homogeneous face than the American people whose territory is as large as half of Europe.

From the state of Maine to the state of Georgia, there are about four hundred leagues. However, less difference exists between the civilization of Maine and that of Georgia than between the civilization of Normandy and that of Brittany. So Maine and Georgia, placed at two extremities of a vast

and *Democracy* lead to the thought that these texts, published by Beaumont as dating from 1836, are perhaps the fruit of an earlier voyage (*Voyages en Angleterre, Irelande, Suisse et Algérie, OC,* V, 2, pp. 173–88). In his "Rapport fait à l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques sur l'ouvrage de M. Cherbuliez, entitled *De la démocratie en Suisse"* (*Séances et travaux de l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques,* XII, 1848, pp. 97–119, reproduced as an appendix to *Democracy* beginning with the twelfth edition), Tocqueville comments on the Swiss confederation in terms entirely similar to those of this chapter, and concludes that Switzerland possesses the most ineffective federal constitution that could exist.

empire, naturally find more real ease in forming a confederation, than Normandy and Brittany, which are separated only by a stream.

With these opportunities, which the mores and habits of a people offer to the American law-makers, are joined others that arise from the geographic position of the country. It is principally to the latter that the adoption and maintenance of the federal system must be attributed.[c]

[Despite all these obstacles, I believe federal governments still more appropriate for maintaining internal peace and for favoring, over a vast empire, the peaceful development of social well-being, than for struggling with advantage against foreign enemies.

It is the difficulty that confederations find in sustaining great wars that makes so many peoples incapable of enduring federal government.]

The most important of all the actions that can mark the life of a people is war. In war, a people acts as a single individual vis-à-vis foreign peoples; it fights for its very existence.

As long as it is only a question of maintaining peace within the interior of a country and of favoring prosperity, skill in the government, reason among the governed, and a certain natural attachment that men almost always have for their country can easily suffice. But for a nation to be able to wage a great war, the citizens must impose numerous and painful sacrifices on themselves. To believe that a large number of men will be capable of submitting themselves to such social exigencies, is to know humanity very badly. [Were the necessity of war to be universally acknowledged, the natural inclination of the human mind is to reject the annoying conse-

c. In the margin:

≠General ideas./
Insular position of the Union.
Indians, nothing. 4,000 soldiers. Attacked from a distance, defended close by./
Impossibility of taxes. *Federalist.*/
Difficulties over the militias in the War of 1812./
Inability of the large nations of Europe to live federally./
Fortunate Americans.≠

quences of the principle that it previously accepted. So once the principle of war is accepted, an authority capable of forcing individuals to bear its consequences must be found somewhere.]

It follows that all peoples who have had to wage great wars have been led, almost despite themselves, to augment the forces of the government. Those who have not been able to succeed in doing so have been conquered. A long war almost always puts nations in this sad alternative; their defeat delivers them to destruction, and their triumph, to despotism.

[There is a great nation in Europe where the forces of society [v: governmental forces] are centralized in such a way that in case of war, a drumbeat assembles the entire nation, so to speak, around its leader, like the inhabitants of a village. This nation, apart from its courage, must have a great advantage over others for waging war; on several occasions, therefore, we have seen it dominate all of Europe by force of arms.

The fact is that to draw from people the enormous sacrifices of men and money that war requires and to concentrate, in one place and at a given time, all national forces, nothing less is required than the efforts of complete sovereignty.

Now, the inevitable evil of confederations, I have already said, is the division of sovereignty. In the federal system, not only is there no administrative centralization or anything approaching it, but also governmental centralization itself exists only very incompletely. That is always a great cause of weakness when it is a question of defense against peoples among whom governmental centralization exists.

In the federal Constitution of the United States . . . [cf. infra (ed.)]].

So, in general, it is during a war that the weakness of a government is revealed in a most visible and dangerous manner; and I have shown that the inherent vice of federal governments was to be very weak.

In the federal system, not only is there no administrative centralization or anything approaching it, but also governmental centralization itself exists only incompletely. That is always a great cause of weakness, when defense is necessary against peoples among whom governmental centralization is complete.

In the federal Constitution of the United States, of all federal constitutions, the one where the central government is vested with the most real

strength, this evil still makes itself acutely felt. [The law gives Congress, it is true, the right to take all measures required by the interest of the country, but the difficulty is to exercise such a right. If Congress, pressed by urgent needs, comes to impose on the governed sacrifices equal to the dangers, the discontent of those individuals who suffer does not fail to find a place of support in the sovereignty of the states, or at least in the ambition of those who lead the states and who, in turn, want the support of the malcontents. The states that do not want to wage war, or to whom the war is useless or harmful, easily find in the interpretation of the Constitution the means to refuse their support. The physical and, above all, the moral force of the nation is considerably reduced by it, for even the possibility of such an event renders the federal government weak and slow to act; it fills the government with hesitations and fears and prevents it from even attempting all that it could do.

"It is evident," says Hamilton in the *Federalist,* no. 12, "from the state of the country, from the habits of the people, from the experience we have had on the point itself that it is impracticable to raise any very considerable sums by direct taxation." The direct tax is in fact the most visible and burdensome of taxes; but at the same time, it is the only one that can always be resorted to during a war.]

A single example will allow the reader to judge.

The Constitution gives Congress the right to call the state militias into active duty when it is a matter of suppressing an insurrection or repelling an invasion. Another article says that in this case the President of the United States is the Commander in Chief of the militia.

At the time of the War of 1812, the President ordered the militias of the North to move toward the national borders; Connecticut and Massachusetts, whose interests were harmed by the war, refused to send their contingents.

The Constitution, they said, authorizes the federal government to use the militias in cases of *insurrection* or *invasion;* but in the present situation there was neither insurrection nor invasion. They added that the same Constitution that gave the Union the right to call the militias into active service, left the states the right to appoint the officers. It followed, according to them, that even in war, no officer of the Union had the right to command

the militias, except the President in person. But this was a matter of serving in an army commanded by someone other than him.

These absurd and destructive doctrines received not only the sanction of the Governors and the legislature, but also that of the courts of justice of these two states; and the federal government was forced to find elsewhere the troops that it needed.[41]

[A fact of this nature proves, better than all that I could say, the inability the American Union would have to sustain a great war, even with the improved organization that the 1789 Constitution gave it.

Allow for a moment the existence of such a nation in the midst of the aggressive peoples of Europe where sovereignty is unified and omnipotent, and the relative weakness of the American Union will become for you a proven and plain truth.]

So how is it that the American Union, all protected as it is by the relative perfection of its laws, does not dissolve in the middle of a great war? It is because it has no great wars to fear.[e]

[In general, we must give up citing the example of the United States to prove that confederations can sustain great wars, for the Union has never had a single one of this nature.

Even that of 1812, which the Americans speak about with such pride, was nothing compared to the smallest of those that the ambition of Louis XIV or the French Revolution brought about in Europe. The reason is simple.]

Placed in the center of an immense continent, where human industry

41. Kent's Commentaries, *vol. I, p. 244. Note that I have chosen the example cited above from the time after the establishment of the current Constitution. If I had wanted to go back to the period of the first confederation, I would have pointed out even more conclusive facts. [{Nothing more miserable can be imagined than the way the central government conducted the War of Independence and yet}] Then true enthusiasm reigned in the nation; the Revolution was represented by an eminently popular man; and yet, in that period, Congress had no resources at all, so to speak. Men and money were needed at every moment; the best laid plans failed in the execution; and the Union, always at the brink of perishing, was saved much more by the weakness of its enemies than by its own strength.*[d]

d. At first, the text of this note was found before "[In general . . .]."

e. In the beginning, note 41 was found at this place in the manuscript.

can expand without limits, the Union is almost as isolated from the world as if it were enclosed on all sides by the ocean.[f]

Canada numbers only a million inhabitants; its population is divided into two enemy nations. The rigors of climate limit the extent of its territory and close its ports for six months of the year.

From Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, there are still a few, half-destroyed, savage tribes that six thousand soldiers[g] drive before them.

In the South, the Union at one point touches the empire of Mexico; probably great wars will come from there one day [if the Anglo-Americans and the Mexicans each continue to form a single, unified nation. In Mexico, in fact, there is a numerous population that, different from its neighbors by language, religion, habits and interest [broken text (ed.)]]. But, for a long time still, the little developed state of its civilization, the corruption of its mores and its poverty will prevent Mexico from taking an elevated rank among nations. As for the great powers of Europe, their distance makes them little to be feared.O

So the great happiness of the United States is not to have found a federal constitution that allows it to sustain great wars, but to be so situated that there are none to fear.

No one can appreciate more than I the advantages of the federal system. There I see one of the most powerful devices favoring prosperity and human liberty. I envy the fate of nations permitted to adopt it. But I refuse, nonetheless, to believe that confederated republics could struggle for long, with equal strength, against a nation where governmental power would be centralized.

The people who, in the presence of the great military monarchies of Europe, would come to divide sovereignty, would seem to me to abdicate, by this fact alone, its power and perhaps its existence and its name.

Admirable position of the New World where man has only himself as an enemy. To be happy and free, he only has to want to be.

f. In the margin, with a bracket that includes this paragraph and the two following: *"To note.*
I also say part of all of this at the *future.* Quid?"
g. The figure 4,000 appears in the manuscript as well as in a few other places.

PART II

Until now, I have examined the institutions, I have surveyed the written laws, I have depicted the current forms of political society in the United States.

But above all institutions and beyond all forms resides a sovereign power, that of the people, which destroys or modifies institutions and forms as it pleases.

I have yet to make known by what paths this power, which dominates the laws, proceeds; what its instincts, its passions are; what secret motivating forces push, slow or direct it in its irresistible march; what effects its omnipotence produces, and what future is reserved for it.[a]

a. In the margin:

≠Of freedom of the press.
Of associations.
Of parties.
Of elections. Democratic choices. Electoral mores.
Democratic omnipotence, omnipotence of the majority.
Its tyrannical effects. Political demoralization.
Its counterweights in the *laws,*[1] in the *mores* and in the *local circumstances.*
Jury.

1. Judicial power, above all that of the Union, in that it prevents retroactive laws. Lack of administrative centralization.≠

CHAPTER I

How It Can Be Strictly Said That in the United States It Is the People Who Govern

In America, the people name the one who makes the law and the one who executes it; the people themselves form the jury that punishes infractions of the law. Institutions are democratic not only in their principle, but in all their developments as well; thus the people name their representatives *directly* and generally choose them *every year,* in order to keep them more completely dependent. So it is really the people who lead, and, although the form of the government is representative, clearly the opinions, prejudices, interests, and even the passions of the people cannot encounter any lasting obstacles that can prevent them from appearing in the daily leadership of society.

In the United States, as in all countries where the people rule, the majority governs in the name of the people.[b]

This majority is composed principally of peaceful citizens who, either by taste or by interest, sincerely desire the good of the country. In constant motion around them, parties seek to draw them in and gain their support.[c]

b. In the margin: "≠An action external to society exercised on society resembles the medicine that often aids nature but still more often harms it. Despotism often appears useful, but I mistrust its benefits.≠"

c. Cf. note a of p. 402.

CHAPTER 2

Of Parties in the United States

A great division among parties must be made.—Parties that differ among themselves like rival nations.—Parties strictly speaking.—Difference between great and small parties.—In what times they arise.—Their different characters.—America had great parties.—It no longer has them.—Federalists.—Republicans.—Defeat of the Federalists.—Difficulty of creating parties in the United States.—What is done to succeed in creating them.—Aristocratic or democratic character that is found in all parties.—Struggle of General Jackson against the Bank.

First I must establish a great division among parties.

There are countries so vast that the different populations living there, though united under the same sovereignty, have contradictory interests that give rise to a permanent opposition among them. Then, the various portions of the same people do not form parties strictly speaking, but distinct nations; and if civil war happens to break out, there is a conflict between rival peoples rather than a struggle between factions.

[≠What I call truly a party is a gathering of men who, without sharing the bond of a common birth, view certain points in a certain way.≠]

But when citizens differ among themselves on points that interest all portions of the country equally, such as the general principles of government, for example, then what I will call truly parties are seen to arise.

Parties are an evil inherent in free governments; but they do not have the same character and the same instincts in all periods of time.

There are periods of time when nations feel tormented by such great ills that the idea of a total change in their political constitution occurs to their mind. There are other periods when the malaise is even more profound and when the social state itself is compromised. That is the time of great revolutions and great parties.

Between these centuries of disorders and miseries, you find others when societies are at rest and when the human race seems to catch its breath. In truth, that is still only outward appearance. The march of time does not stop for peoples any more than for men; both advance each day toward an unknown future; and when we believe them stationary, it is because their movements escape us. They are men who are walking; to those who are running, they seem immobile.

[<Similar to the hand that marks the hours; everyone can tell the path it has already followed, but the hand must be watched for a long time to discover that it is moving.>]

Be that as it may, there are periods when the changes that take place in the political constitution and social state of peoples are so slow and so imperceptible, that men think they have arrived at a final state; the human mind then believes itself firmly seated on certain foundations and does not look beyond a certain horizon.

This is the time of intrigues and of small parties.

What I call great political parties are those that are attached to principles more than to their consequences, to generalities and not to particular cases, to ideas and not to men. In general, these parties have more noble traits, more generous passions, more real convictions, a more candid and bold appearance than the others. Here, particular interest, which always plays the greatest role in political passions, hides more cleverly behind the veil of public interest; sometimes it even manages to hide from the view of those whom it arouses and brings into action.

Small parties, on the contrary, are generally without political faith. Since they do not feel elevated and sustained by great objectives, their character is stamped by an egoism that occurs openly in each of their acts. They get worked up from a cold start; their language is violent, but their course is

timid and uncertain. The means they use are miserable, like the very end that they propose. That is why, when a time of calm follows a violent revolution, great men seem suddenly to disappear and souls withdraw into themselves.

Great parties turn society upside down; small ones trouble it; the ones tear it apart and the others deprave it. [<Both have a common trait, however: to reach their ends, they hardly ever use means that conscience approves completely. There are honest men in nearly all parties, but it can be said that no party should be called an honest man.>] The first sometimes save society by shaking it up; the second always disturb it to no profit.

America had great parties; today they no longer exist. From that it has gained a great deal in happiness, but not in morality.[a]

a. The ideas of this paragraph and the three preceding ones are found again almost literally in a note of 14 January 1832 from Notebook E of the American journey (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 260–61) and in a nearly identical note from pocket notebooks 4 and 5 (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 197–98). The last paragraph continues in this way:

> I do not know of a more miserable and more shameful spectacle in the world than the one presented by the different coteries (they do not deserve the name parties) that divide the Union today. Within them, you see stirring, in full view, all the petty and shameful passions that ordinarily take care to hide deep within the human heart. As for the interest of the country, no one considers it; and if someone speaks about it, it is a matter of form. The parties put it at the head of their articles of association, just as their fathers did, in order to conform to long-standing usage. It has no more relation to the rest of the work than the license of the king that our fathers printed on the first page of their books.
>
> It is pitiful to see what a flood of coarse insults, what petty, malicious gossip, and what coarse slanders fill the newspapers that all serve as organs of the parties; with what shameless contempt for social proprieties, they bring the honor of families and the secrets of the domestic hearth before the court of opinion each day.

In a letter dated 1 October 1858 and addressed to William R. Greg (*OCB,* VI, pp. 455–56), Tocqueville comments on an article by the latter on political parties ("The State of the Parties," *National Review* 7, no. 13 (1858): 220–43). He notes as well another danger tied to the absence of great political parties:

> When there are no more great parties, well bound together by shared interests and passions, foreign policy hardly ever fails to become the primary element of parliamentary activity. . . . Now, I regard such a state of things as contrary to the dignity

When the War of Independence finally ended and it was a matter of establishing the foundations of the new government, the nation found itself divided between two opinions. These opinions were as old as the world, and they are found under different forms and given various names in all free societies. One wanted to limit popular power; the other, to expand it indefinitely.

Among the Americans, the struggle between these two opinions never took on the violent character that has often marked it elsewhere. In America, the two parties were in agreement on the most essential points. Neither one had to destroy an old order or turn an entire social state upside down in order to win. Consequently, neither one bound a large number of individuals' lives to the triumph of its principles. But they touched upon nonmaterial interests of the first order, such as love of equality and of independence. That was enough to arouse violent passions.

The party that wanted to limit popular power sought, above all, to apply its doctrines to the Constitution of the Union, which earned it the name *Federalist.*

The other, which claimed to be the exclusive lover of liberty, took the title *Republican.*[b]

and security of nations. Foreign affairs, more than all other matters, need to be treated by a small number of men, *with consistency,* in secret.

And further on he adds:

I find that, with rare sagacity, you have indicated the conditions under which great parties, well disciplined, can exist in a free country. As you say, each of them must be the representative of one of the two great principles that eternally divide human societies, and that, to be brief, can be designated by the names aristocracy and democracy.

b. The history of the Federalists and the Republicans owes a great deal to a conversation with Mr. Biddle, President of the Bank of the United States (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 122–23). The idea that, in America, there are no real parties had already appeared in April 1831, in a conversation with Mr. Schermerhorn on the *Havre,* during the crossing of the Atlantic (notebook E, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 292–93). Beaumont will report this conversation to his father in a letter of 16 May 1831 (*Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 40), and will mention it in *Marie* (I, p. 360).

On Tocqueville's theory of parties, see especially Nicola Matteucci, "Il problema de partito politico nelle riflessioni d'Alexis de Tocqueville," *Pensiero politico* 1, no. 1 (1968):

America is the land of democracy. So the Federalists were always a minority; but they counted in their ranks nearly all the great men who had emerged from the War of Independence, and their moral power was very extensive. Circumstances, moreover, favored them. The ruin of the first confederation made the people afraid of falling into anarchy, and the Federalists profited from this temporary frame of mind. For ten or twelve years, they led affairs and were able to apply, not all of their principles, but some of them; for, day by day, the opposing current became too violent for anyone to dare to struggle against it.

In 1801, the Republicans finally took possession of the government. Thomas Jefferson was named President; he brought them the support of a celebrated name, a great talent, and an enormous popularity.

The Federalists had only survived thanks to artificial means and with the aid of temporary resources; the virtue or talents of their leaders, as well as the good fortune of circumstances, had brought them to power. When the Republicans, in turn, gained power, the opposing party was as if enveloped by a sudden flood. An immense majority declared against it, and the party found itself at once in such a small minority that it immediately gave up hope. From that moment, the Republican or Democratic party has marched from conquest to conquest and has taken possession of the entire society.

The Federalists, feeling defeated, without resources, and finding themselves isolated within the nation, divided; some joined the victors; others put down their banner and changed their name. They entirely ceased to exist as a party a fairly great number of years ago.

The transitional period when the Federalists held power is, in my opinion, one of the most fortunate events that accompanied the birth of the great American union. The Federalists struggled against the irresistible inclination of their century and country. Their theories, however excellent or flawed, had the fault of being inapplicable as a whole to the society that the Federalists wanted to govern; so what happened under Jefferson would

39–92; and Gerald M. Bonetto, "Alexis de Tocqueville's Concept of Political Parties," *American Studies,* 22, no. 2 (1981): 59–79.

have happened sooner or later. But at least their government let the new republic have time to get established and allowed it afterward to bear, without difficulty, the rapid development of the doctrines that they had fought. A great number of their principles ended up, moreover, being accepted into the creed of their adversaries; and the federal Constitution, which still continues to exist in our time, is a lasting monument to their patriotism and wisdom.[c]

So today great political parties are not seen in the United States. Parties that threaten the future of the Union abound there; but none exist that appear to attack the present form of government and the general course of society. The parties that threaten the Union rest, not on principles, but on material interests. In the different provinces of so vast an empire, these interests constitute rival nations rather than parties.[d] That is how the North

c. Parties./

.-.-.- great parties that shared the first times of the Union .-.-.- but their principles are found again. That one of the two, it is true, attained an immense superiority. That from there came the miserable party spirit of today. Principles no longer being in question, but men, or at least principles forced to hide behind interests and men. Analogous example in France. There was grandeur in the struggle of the liberal party with the royalist party. But since the first triumphed, there is only pettiness in the debates that stir within it (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 35).

d. Gustave de Beaumont:

Is this a theory safe from criticism? So you call *great parties* only those that rest on a political theory, and you deny this name to those that have *immense interests* for their base. That is arbitrary.

I see clearly that the *moral* and political consequences of the different parties are not the same. They are parties nonetheless.

Do you get out of it well by saying: these are *rival nations rather than parties?*

But the parties concerned (for example, those for and against free trade) are not only from province to province, but also in each province, from citizen to citizen.

It would have been more correct, I believe, to establish a distinction between *great* parties that have political theories as objectives and *great* parties that are tied to material interests. Certainly America, turned upside down and threatened with dissolution by the question of free trade, has within it *great parties;* though different from ours, they are no less great. Note that these parties would be powerful among us, if we did not have others. After all, the developments of the author lead to the same result (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 57–58).

was recently seen to uphold the system of commercial tariffs, and the South, to take arms in favor of free trade. The sole reason is that the North engages in manufacturing and the South in agriculture,[e] and the restrictive system works to the profit of the one and to the detriment of the other.

For lack of great parties, the United States swarms with small ones, and public opinion splinters infinitely on questions of details. The pain that is taken there to create parties cannot be imagined; it is not an easy thing to do in our time.[f] In the United States, there is no religious hatred, because religion is universally respected and no one sect is dominant; no class hatred, because the people are everything and no one still dares to struggle against them; finally there are no public miseries to exploit, because the material state of the country offers such an enormous scope to industry that leaving man to himself is enough for him to work wonders. But [particular] ambition must indeed succeed in creating parties, because it is difficult to throw someone who holds power out of office for the sole reason that you want to take his place. So all the skill of politicians consists of forming parties. A politician, in the United States, seeks first to discern his interest and to see what analogous interests could be grouped around his; then he busies himself finding out if, by chance, a doctrine or principle exists in the world that could be placed conveniently at the head of the new association, to give it the right to come into being and to circulate freely. It amounts to what would be called the license of the king that our fathers used to print on the first sheet of their works and incorporated into the book, even though it was not part of it.[g]

e. The manuscript says: ". . . and the South only in producing and the restrictive system . . ."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Economists will find that this term *only in producing* is incorrect. Manufacturers being producers, like farmers or makers of sugar" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 51).

f. "Cite the birth of the masons and the anti-masons to show how parties form and recruit in the United States" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 35). See the story of the freemason Morgan in Beaumont, *Marie,* I, pp. 353–55.

g. In the manuscript: ". . . had no relation to the object of the book."

Gustave de Beaumont: "I beg your pardon; all the licenses of the king were related to the book and to its objective. So say: *that our fathers used to print on the first sheet of their works and incorporated into the book, even though it was not part of it"* (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 59).

This done, the new power is introduced into the political world.

To a foreigner, nearly all the domestic quarrels of the Americans seem, at first view, incomprehensible or childish, and you do not know if you should pity a people who seriously keeps itself busy with such miseries or envy it the good fortune of being able to keep busy in that way.

But when you come carefully to study the secret instincts that govern factions in America, you easily discover that most of them are more or less linked with one or the other of the two great parties that have divided men since free societies have existed. As you enter more profoundly into the intimate thought of these parties, you notice that some of them work to narrow the use of public power, others, to expand it.

I am not saying that American parties always have as their open aim, or even as their hidden aim, making aristocracy or democracy prevail in the country. I am saying that aristocratic or democratic passions are easily found at the bottom of all the parties, and, although hidden from view, they form the tender spot and the soul of the parties.

I will cite a recent example. The President attacks the Bank of the United States. The country is aroused and divided; the enlightened classes generally side with the Bank; the people favor the President. Do you think that the people knew how to discern the reasons for their opinion in the middle of the twists and turns of such a difficult question, where experienced men hesitate? Not at all. But the Bank is a great establishment that has an independent existence; the people, who destroy or raise all powers, can do nothing to it; that astonishes them. Amid the universal movement of society, this immobile point shocks their sight, and they want to see if they cannot succeed in getting it moving like the rest.

Of the Remnants of the Aristocratic Party in the United States

Secret opposition of the rich to democracy.—They withdraw into private life.—Taste that they show inside their residences for exclusive pleasures and luxury.—Their simplicity outside.—Their affected condescension for the people.

Sometimes among a people divided by opinions, when the equilibrium among parties is broken, one of them acquires an irresistible preponderance. It crushes all obstacles, overwhelms its adversary and exploits the entire society to its profit. The vanquished, then despairing of success, hide or fall silent. A universal immobility and silence develop. The nation seems united by the same idea. The conquering party stands up and says: "I have brought peace to the country; you owe me thanks."

But beneath this apparent unanimity, profound divisions and a real opposition are still hidden.

This is what happened in America. When the democratic party gained preponderance, you saw it take exclusive possession of the leadership of public affairs. Since then, it has not ceased to model the mores and laws after its desires.[h]

Today you can say that, in the United States, the wealthy classes of society are almost entirely out of public affairs, and that wealth, far from being a right, is a real cause of disfavor and an obstacle to reaching power.

So the rich prefer abandoning the contest to sustaining an often unequal struggle against the poorest of their fellow citizens. Not being able to take a rank in public life analogous to the one they occupy in private life, they

h. There is an often very effective means to reestablish peace in a country divided by opinion; it is to give so complete a preponderance to one of the parties that the other disappears or falls into silence. Experience has proved that this was buying peace at a high price. When Ferdinand and Isabella chased the Moors from Spain, they made a great cause of internal troubles disappear; but they impoverished the country and delivered a blow to its industry from which it has never recovered.

The democratic party acted in the same way in America. Once in power, it took exclusive possession of the leadership of public affairs and modeled the mores and laws after its desires (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 40–41).

abandon the first in order to concentrate on the second. In the middle of the State, they form something like a society apart with its own tastes and enjoyments.

The rich man submits to this state of things as to an evil without remedy; with great care, he even avoids showing that it wounds him. So you hear him publicly praise the sweet pleasures of republican government and the advantages of democratic forms. For, next to hating their enemies, what is more natural to men than flattering them?

Do you see this opulent citizen? Wouldn't you say, a Jew of the Middle Ages who is afraid of arousing suspicion of his wealth? His attire is simple; his gait is modest. Within the four walls of his dwelling, he adores luxury; into this sanctuary, he lets only a few chosen guests that he arrogantly calls his equals. You meet no nobleman in Europe who appears more exclusive in his pleasures than he, more envious of the slightest advantages that a privileged position assures. But here he is, leaving his house, to go to work in a tiny, dusty room that he occupies in the business center of the city, where everyone is free to come to meet him. Along his path, his shoemaker happens by, and they stop. They begin to converse with each other. What can they be saying? These two citizens are dealing with the affairs of the State, and they will not part without shaking hands.

At the bottom of this enthusiasm for convention and in the midst of these obsequious forms toward the dominant power, it is easy to notice in the rich a great disgust for the democratic institutions of their country. The people are a power that they fear and despise. If, one day, the bad government of democracy led to a political crisis, if monarchy ever presented itself in the United States as something feasible, you would soon discover the truth of what I am advancing.

The two great weapons that parties use to succeed are newspapers and associations.[j]

j. "General picture. A mass, not impassioned, wanting the good. In the middle of it, parties that seek to create a majority to *legalize* their ideas" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 40).

CHAPTER 3

Of Freedom of the Press in the United States

Difficulty of limiting freedom of the press.—Particular reasons that certain peoples have for valuing this liberty.—Freedom of the press is a necessary consequence of the sovereignty of the people as it is understood in America.—Violence of the language of the periodical press in the United States.—The periodical press has its own instincts; the example of the United States proves it.—Opinion of the Americans about the judicial suppression of the crimes of the press.—Why the press is less powerful in the United States than in France.

Freedom of the press not only makes its power felt over political opinions, but also over all of the opinions of men. It modifies not only laws, but also mores. In another part of this work, I will seek to determine the degree of influence that freedom of the press has exercised over civil society in the United States; I will try to discern the direction it has given to ideas, the habits it has imparted to the mind and sentiments of the Americans.[a] For now, I only want to examine the effects produced by freedom of the press in the political world.

[{The greatest problem of modern societies is to know how to use freedom of the press.} I love freedom of the press enough to have the courage to say everything that I think about it.]

I admit that to freedom of the press I do not bring that complete and instantaneous love that is given to things supremely good by their nature.

a. See chapter VI of the second part of the third volume.

[I do not see freedom of the press in the same way that I consider *patriotism* or *virtue,* for example.][b] I love it much more from consideration of the evils it prevents than for the good things that it does.[c]

If someone showed me an intermediate position where I could hope to stand firm between complete independence and total subservience of thought, I would perhaps take my position there; but who will find this intermediate position?[d] You start from license of the press, and you march in rank order; what do you do? First, you submit writers to juries. But the juries acquit them, and what was only the opinion of an isolated man becomes the opinion of the country. So you have done too much and too little. You have to move further. You deliver authors to permanent magistrates; but judges are obliged to hear before condemning. What someone was afraid to avow in a book, is proclaimed with impunity in the defense plea. Thus, what was said obscurely in one account is found repeated in a thousand others. The expression is the external form, and, if I can express myself in this way, the body of the thought; but it is not the thought itself. Your courts arrest the body, but the soul escapes them and subtly slips through their hands. So you have done too much and too little; you must

b. Gustave de Beaumont: "Patriotism is a virtue, so there is no alternative. Moreover, why compare a political institution to a virtue? If you want to make your comparison with a political institution that you consider as essentially and absolutely good, begin by searching your mind. Is there a principle, an institution that appears so to you? Why don't you take individual liberty?" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 60).

c. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> In general the author should stay in the background in order to allow only his book to speak. His opinions should be appreciated by the reader because of a deduction of the ideas that the work develops. If you depart from this rule, it must at least be in the briefest possible way. I believe that the two paragraphs, the one beginning with the words *I admit,* the second with the words *I love it,* could be deleted. They have the disadvantage of delineating the author too openly, but without giving this picture very clear contours. There is a bit of obscurity both in the thought and in its expression. My proposition accepted, you will pass immediately to the paragraph that begins with the words: *if someone"* (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 42–43).

The phrasing of the last sentence of this paragraph is by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 60). In the manuscript, it finishes this way: *". . . from consideration of the evils that follow its ruin than for the good things that it does."*

d. The manuscript says *a marker.* Beaumont suggested putting *an intermediate position* (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 60).

continue to move.[e] Finally you abandon writers to censors. Very good; we are getting closer. But isn't the political rostrum free? So you still haven't done anything. I am wrong; you have made things worse. Would you, by chance, take thought for one of those material powers that grow with the number of their agents? Would you count writers like soldiers in an army? In contrast to all material powers, the power of thought often increases with the small number of those who express it. The spoken word of a powerful man, which spreads alone through the passions of a silent assembly, has more power than the confused cries of a thousand orators. And if only someone can speak freely in a single public place, it is as if he has spoken publicly in each village. So you must destroy the freedom to speak as well as to write. This time, here you are at your destination: everyone is quiet. But where have you arrived? You began from the abuses of liberty, and I find you under the feet of a despot.

You have gone from extreme independence to extreme servitude without finding, on such a long journey, a single place where you could rest.

Some peoples, apart from the general reasons that I have just set forth, have particular reasons that must attach them to freedom of the press.

In certain nations claiming to be free, each of the agents of power can violate the law with impunity, and the constitution of the country does not give the oppressed the right to complain to the judicial system. Among these peoples, the independence of the press must no longer be considered as one of the guarantees, but as the sole remaining guarantee for liberty and for the security of the citizens.

So if the men who govern these nations spoke about taking independence away from the press, the whole people could respond to them: Allow

e. This reflection is similar to the one that appears in the discussion about Malesherbes and freedom of the press in *Essai sur la vie, les écrits et les opinions de M. de Malesherbes* (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1819–1821, I, pp. 179–83) of Count Boissy-d'Anglas. On the general ideas of this chapter, see the conversation with Spencer (non-alphabetic notebook 1, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 69–70), and Beaumont, *Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 101.

us to prosecute your crimes before ordinary judges, and perhaps then we will consent not to appeal to the court of opinion.[f]

In a country where the dogma of sovereignty of the people openly reigns, censorship is not only a danger, but also a great absurdity.[g]

When you grant each person a right to govern society, you must recognize his capacity to choose between the different opinions that trouble his contemporaries and to appreciate the different facts, the knowledge of which can guide him.

So sovereignty of the people and freedom of the press are two entirely correlative things. Censorship and universal suffrage are, on the contrary, two things that contradict each other and that cannot exist together for long in the political institutions of the same people. Among the twelve million men who live within the territory of the United States, *not a single one* has yet dared to propose limiting freedom of the press.

When I arrived in America, the first newspaper that came before my eyes contained the following article, which I translate faithfully:

> Throughout the whole of this affair, the tone and language of Jackson [the President] was that of a heartless despot, alone intent on preserving his power. Ambition is his crime and will yet prove his curse. Intrigue is his vocation, and will yet overthrow and confound him. Corruption is his element and will yet react upon him to his utter dismay and confusion. He has been a successful as well as a desperate political gangster, but the hour of retribution is at hand; he must disgorge his winnings, throw away his false dice, and seek the hermitage, there to blaspheme and execrate his folly, for to repent is not a virtue within the capacity of his heart to obtain (*Vincennes Gazette*).

f. "Freedom of the press is the sole guarantee for a people who cannot attack the agents of power through the courts, something seen among us. If the men who govern us allow us to prosecute their misdeeds and crimes before ordinary judges, perhaps we will consent not to attack their absurdities and their vices before the court of public opinion" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 93).

g. In the margin: "≠After the people themselves, the press is the most irresistible power that exists in America.≠"

Many men in France imagine that the violence of the press among us is due to the instability of the social state, to our political passions and to the general malaise that follows. So they are constantly waiting for a time when, after society has regained a tranquil footing, the press in turn will become calm. As for me, I would willingly attribute the extreme ascendancy that the press has over us to the causes indicated above; but I do not think that these causes influence its language much. The periodical press seems to me to have its own instincts and passions, apart from the circumstances in which it works. What happens in American really proves it for me.

America is perhaps at this moment the country in the world that contains within it the fewest seeds of revolution. In America, nevertheless, the press has the same destructive tastes as in France, and the same violence without the same reasons for anger. [<≠Most often it feeds on hate and envy; it speaks more to passions than to reason; it spreads falsehood and truth all jumbled together.≠>] In America, as in France, the press is an extraordinary power, a strange mixture of good and evil; liberty cannot live without it and order can hardly be maintained with it.[h]

What must be said is that the press has much less power in the United States than among us. Nothing, however, is rarer in that country than seeing a judicial proceeding directed against the press. The reason is simple: the Americans, while accepting among themselves the dogma of sovereignty of the people, have applied it sincerely. They did not have the idea of establishing, with elements that change every day, constitutions that endured forever. So to attack existing laws is not criminal, as long as you do not want to evade them by violence.

They believe, moreover, that the courts are powerless to moderate the press; that because the flexibility of human languages constantly escapes judicial analysis, crimes of this nature in a way slip out of the hand that reaches out to seize them. They think that to be able to act effectively on the press, a court would have to be found that was not only devoted to the

h. Variant: "The American press, like ours, is a power that you can speak ill of in quiet and that you bow before in public, that you can fight by surprise, but that no power can attack head on" Cf. note o of p. 78.

existing order, but was also able to stand above the public opinion that stirs around it, a court that judged without allowing publicity, ruled without justifying its decisions, and punished the intention even more than the words. Whoever had the power to create and to maintain such a court would waste his time pursuing freedom of the press; for then he would be absolute master of society itself and would be able to rid himself of writers and their writings at the same time. In the matter of the press, therefore, there is really not a middle ground between servitude and license. To reap the inestimable advantages that freedom of the press assures, you must know how to submit to the inevitable evils that it produces. Wanting to gain the first while escaping from the second is to give yourself over to one of these illusions that usually delude sick nations when, tired by struggles and exhausted by efforts, they seek the means to allow hostile opinions and opposite principles to coexist at the same time on the same soil.

The little power of newspapers in America is due to several causes; here are the principal ones:

The freedom to write, like all other freedoms, is that much more to be feared, the newer it is. A people who has never heard the affairs of State treated in front of it believes the first popular orator who appears. Among the Anglo-Americans, this liberty is as old as the founding of the colonies. Moreover, the press, which knows so well how to inflame human passions, cannot create those passions by itself. [{What feeds freedom of the press, what gives it a hold on human will are political passions.}] Now, in America, political life is active, varied, even agitated, but it is rarely troubled by profound passions; rarely do the latter arise when material interests are not jeopardized, and in the United States these interests prosper. To judge the difference that exists on this point between the Anglo-Americans and us, I have only to glance at the newspapers of the two peoples. In France, the commercial advertisements occupy a very limited space; even the news items are few; the vital part of a newspaper is where the political discussions are found. In America, three quarters of the immense newspaper put before your eyes are filled by advertisements; the rest is usually occupied by political news or simple stories; only now and then, in an obscure corner, do you notice one

of those heated discussions that among us are the daily food of the reader.

Every power augments the action of its forces as their control is centralized; that is a general law of nature that examination demonstrates to the observer and that an even more certain instinct has always shown to the least of despots.

In France, the press combines two distinct types of centralization.

Nearly all of its power is concentrated in the same place and, so to speak, in the same hands, for the organs of the press are very few in number.

Constituted in this way, in the middle of a skeptical nation, the power of the press is necessarily almost without limit. It is an enemy with which a government can reach a shorter or longer truce; but it is difficult for a government to live in confrontation with the press for long.

Neither one nor the other of the two types of centralization that I have just spoken about exists in America.

The United States has no capital.[j] [≠In America the press is even less centralized than the government it attacks.≠] Enlightenment, like power, is disseminated in all the parts of this vast country. There, the beams of human intelligence, instead of coming from a common center, cut across each other in all directions; the Americans have placed the general direction of thought nowhere, any more than they have that of public affairs.

That is due to local circumstances that do not depend on men. But here are the ones that come from the laws:

In the United States, there are no licenses for printers, no stamps or registration for newspapers; the rule of surety bonds is unknown.

As a result, the creation of a newspaper is a simple and easy undertaking; a few[k] subscribers suffice for the journalist to cover his expenses. The

j. In the manuscript: "is fortunate enough not to have a capital."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "I would remove *fortunate enough.* With a single phrase, the author comes to a decision offhandedly on a question that is very susceptible to controversy. That is at least unnecessary" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 45).

k. In the manuscript a blank indicates that Tocqueville thought about putting here the precise number of subscribers. Following this sentence you find: "The most reliable reports put it at [blank (ed.)] in 1832."

number of periodical or semi-periodical writings in the United States therefore surpasses all belief. The most enlightened Americans attribute the little power of the press to this incredible scattering of its forces. It is an axiom of political science in the United States that the only means to neutralize the effects of newspapers is to multiply their number. I cannot imagine that a truth so obvious has not yet become more common among us. I understand without difficulty that those who want to make revolutions with the aid of the press try to give it only a few powerful organs; but what I absolutely cannot conceive is that the official partisans of the established order and the natural supporters of existing laws believe that, by concentrating the press, its action can be attenuated. The governments of Europe seem to me to act toward the press in the same way that knights used to act toward their enemies. They had noticed from their own experience that centralization was a powerful weapon, and they wanted to provide it to their enemy, most probably to gain more glory in resisting him.

In the United States, there is hardly any small town without its newspaper. It can be easily understood that, among so many combatants, neither discipline nor unity of action can be established. Therefore each one raises his banner. Not that all the political newspapers of the Union are lined up for or against the administration; but they attack and defend it in a hundred different ways. So in the United States newspapers cannot establish those great waves of opinions that rise up or overwhelm the most powerful dikes. This division of the forces of the press produces still other no less remarkable effects. Because the creation of a newspaper is so easy, everyone can do it. On the other hand, competition means that a newspaper cannot hope for very great profits; this prevents great industrial talents from getting involved in enterprises of this type. Even if newspapers were a source of riches, they are so excessively numerous that there would not be enough talented writers to run them. So in general journalists in the United States do not have a very high [social] position; their education is only rudimentary; and the turn of their ideas is often vulgar. Now, in all things the majority makes the law; it establishes certain behaviors to which each person then conforms. The ensemble of these common habits

is called a spirit;[m] there is the spirit of the bar, the spirit of the court. The spirit of the journalist, in France, is to discuss in a violent, but elevated and often eloquent way, the great interests of the State; if this is not always so, it is because every rule has its exceptions. The spirit of the journalist, in America, is to attack in a coarse way, unaffectedly and without art, the passions of those whom he addresses, to leave principles behind in order to grab men, to follow men in their private life, and to lay bare their weaknesses and their vices [treat the secrets of the domestic hearth and the honor of the marital bed].

Such an abuse of thought must be deplored. Later I will have the opportunity to inquire into what influence newspapers have on the taste and morality of the American people; but I repeat that at the moment I am only dealing with the political world. You cannot hide from the fact that the political effects of this license of the press contribute indirectly to the maintenance of public tranquillity. The result is that men who already have an elevated position in the opinion of their fellow citizens do not dare to write in the newspapers; and they thereby lose the most formidable weapon that they could use to stir popular passion to their profit.[1] The result is, above all, that the personal views expressed by journalists have no weight, so to speak, in the eyes of readers. What readers seek in a newspaper is knowledge of facts; only by altering or misrepresenting these facts can a journalist gain some influence for his opinion.

Reduced to these resources alone, the press still exercises an immense power in America. It makes political life circulate in all parts of this vast territory. Always watchful, the press constantly lays bare the secret

m. In the manuscript: "what is called a spirit."
Gustave de Beaumont:

I do not like that. Here is how I would conceive the sentence: I would delete *what is called a spirit,* which is certainly bad (there are many other things that are called a *spirit,* without counting the author) and I would say: in all, there is what is called the *spirit of the thing.* There is the *spirit of the bar,* the *spirit of the court.* Journalism also has its own. In France it consists . . ." (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 62).

1. *They write in newspapers only in the rare cases when they want to address the people and speak in their own name; when, for example, slanderous charges have been spread about them, and they want to reestablish the true facts.*

motivating forces of politics and compels public men, one by one, to appear before the court of opinion. It rallies interests around certain doctrines and formulates the creed of parties. Through the press, interests speak together without seeing each other, agree without having contact. When a large number of the organs of the press manage to follow the same path, their influence eventually becomes nearly irresistible; and public opinion, always struck from the same side, ends by yielding to their blows.

In the United States, each newspaper individually has little power; but the periodical press, after the people, is still the first of powers.[A]

That the Opinions Established under the Dominion of Freedom of the Press in the United States Are Often More Tenacious Than Those That Are Found Elsewhere under the Dominion of Censorship.[n]

In the United States, democracy constantly leads new men to the leadership of public affairs; so the government has little coherence and order in its measures. But the general principles of government there are more stable than in many other countries, and the principal opinions that rule society are more lasting. When an idea, whether sound or unreasonable, takes hold of the mind of the American people, nothing is more difficult than to eradicate it.

The same fact has been observed in England, the European country in which, for a century, the greatest freedom of thought and the most invincible prejudices have been seen.

I attribute this effect to the very cause that, at first view, should seemingly prevent it, freedom of the press. Peoples among whom this freedom exists are attached to their opinions by pride as much as by conviction. They love them because they seem sound to them, and also because they have chosen

n. In the margin: "≠But this is due to the political institutions and not to freedom of the press.≠"

them. And they hold them not only as something true, but also as something of their own.

There are still several other reasons.

A great man has said that *ignorance is at the two ends of knowledge.*[0] Perhaps it would have been more true to say that deep convictions are found only at the two ends, and that doubt is in the middle. In fact, you can consider human intelligence in three distinct and often successive states.

A man strongly believes, because he adopts a belief without going deeper. When objections appear, he doubts. Often he succeeds in resolving all these doubts; and then he begins to believe again. This time, he no longer grasps truth haphazardly and in the shadows; but he faces it and walks directly toward its light.[2]

When freedom of the press finds men in the first state, it leaves them for yet a long time with this habit of believing strongly without reflection; only it changes the object of their unthinking beliefs each day. So, over the whole intellectual horizon, the mind of man continues to see only one point at a time; but this point is constantly changing. This is the time of sudden revolutions. Woe to the generations that are the first suddenly to allow freedom of the press!

Soon, however, the circle of new ideas is nearly covered. Experience arrives, and man is plunged into doubt and a universal distrust.

You can be assured that the majority of men will always stop at one of these two states. The majority will believe without knowing why, or will not know exactly what should be believed.

As for the other type of thoughtful and self-confident conviction that is born out of knowledge and arises from the very midst of the agitations of doubt, it will never be granted except in response to the efforts made by a very small number of men to attain it.

0. Pascal, *Pensées,* number 83 in Lafuma edition.

2. *Still, I do not know if this thoughtful and self-confident conviction ever elevates man to the degree of ardor and devotion that dogmatic beliefs inspire.*

Now, it has been observed that, in centuries of religious fervor, men sometimes changed belief; while in centuries of doubt, each one stubbornly kept his belief. This is how things happen in politics, under the rule of freedom of the press. Since all social theories, one by one, have been contested and fought, those who are attached to one of them keep it, not so much because they are sure that it is good, as because they are not sure that there is a better one.

In these centuries, you do not risk death as easily for your opinions; but you do not change them. And, at the very same time, fewer martyrs and fewer apostates are found.

To this reason, add another still more powerful. When opinions are doubted, men end up being attached solely to instincts and to material interests, which are much more visible, more tangible and more permanent by their nature than opinions are.

To know whether democracy or aristocracy governs better is a very difficult question to decide. But clearly democracy hinders one man and aristocracy oppresses another.[p]

That is a self-evident truth; there is no need to discuss it; you are rich and I am poor.

[≠When, as often happens, freedom of the press is combined with sovereignty of the people, the majority is sometimes seen to decide clearly in favor of an opinion. Then, the opposite opinion no longer has a way to be heard; those who share it fall silent, while their adversaries triumph out loud.

Suddenly there is an unimaginable silence of which we Europeans can have no idea. Certain thoughts seem suddenly to disappear from the memory of men. Then freedom of the press exists in name, but in fact censorship

p. In the manuscript: "that democracy hinders you and aristocracy oppresses me."

Gustave de Beaumont: "It is not the author's intention to enter on stage and to appear as a proletarian crushed by the aristocrats. So this form must be dropped; say: *But clearly democracy hinders one man and aristocracy oppresses another.* Then you could finish by saying: *You are rich and I am poor.* Why? Because then it is clearly seen that this is only a convention of language" (YTC, CIIIb, e, pp. 63, 54).

reigns, a censorship a thousand times more powerful than that exercised by power./

Note. I know of no country where freedom of the press exists less than in America on certain questions. There are few despotic countries where censorship does not concern the form rather than the substance of thought. But in America there are subjects that cannot be touched upon in any way≠].

CHAPTER 4

Of Political Association in the United States

Daily use that the Anglo-Americans make of the right of association.—Three types of political associations.—How the Americans apply the representative system to associations.—Dangers that result for the State.—Great convention of 1831 relating to the tariff.—Legislative character of this convention.—Why the unlimited exercise of the right of association is not as dangerous in the United States as elsewhere.—Why it can be considered necessary there.—Utility of associations among democratic peoples.

Of all the countries in the world, America has taken greatest advantage of association and has applied this powerful means of action[a] to the greatest variety of objectives.

Apart from permanent associations created by the law, known as towns, cities and counties, a multitude of others owe their birth and development only to individual wills.

The inhabitant of the United States learns from birth that he must depend on himself in the struggle against the ills and difficulties of life; he looks upon social authority only with a defiant and uneasy eye, and calls upon its power only when he cannot do without it. This begins to be noticed as early as school where children, even in their games, submit to their

a. Variant: "≠Of all the countries in the world, America is where government is least centralized. It is also the one that has taken greatest advantage of association. There is a correlation between these two things.≠"

own rules and punish their own infractions.[b] The same spirit is found in all the actions of social life. An obstruction occurs on the public road; the way is interrupted; traffic stops; the neighbors soon get together as a deliberative body; out of this improvised assembly will come an executive power that will remedy the difficulty, before the idea of an authority pre-dating that of those interested has occurred to anyone's imagination. If it is a matter of pleasure, the Americans will associate to give more splendor and order to the festival. Lastly, they unite to resist entirely intellectual enemies: together they fight intemperance. In the United States, they associate for purposes of public security, commerce and industry, [pleasure], morality and religion. There is nothing that human will despairs of achieving by the free action of the collective power of individuals.

Later I will have the opportunity to speak about the effects that association produces in civil life.[c] At the moment, I must stay within the political world.

[≠After the press, association is the great means that parties use to get into public affairs and to gain the majority.

In America the freedom of association for political ends is unlimited. The freedom of assembly in order to discuss together the views of the association is equally unlimited.≠]

Once the right of association is recognized, citizens can use it in different ways.

An association consists only of the public support that a certain number of individuals give to such and such doctrines and of the promise that they make to work in a particular way toward making those doctrines prevail. Thus the right to associate almost merges with freedom to

b. "So how to move hearts and develop love of country and its laws? Dare I say? By the games of children; by institutions, pointless in the eyes of superficial men, but which form cherished habits and invincible attachments" (Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne,* chapter I, in *Œuvres complètes* [Paris: Pléiade, 1964], III, p. 955).

c. In the margin: "≠Perhaps the chapter should begin here and what precedes should be kept for the chapter on ordinary associations?≠"

write;[d] but the association already has more power than the press. When an opinion is represented by an association, it is forced to take a clearer and more precise form. It counts its partisans and involves them in its cause. The latter learn to know each other, and their ardor increases with their number. The association gathers the efforts of divergent minds into a network and vigorously pushes them toward a single, clearly indicated goal [<even if it did not provide material means of action, its moral force would still be very formidable>].

The second level in the exercise of the right of association is the power to assemble. When a political association is allowed to locate centers of action at certain important points of the country, its activity becomes greater and its influence more extensive. There, men see each other; the means of action combine; opinions are expressed with the force and heat that written thought can never attain.

Finally, in the exercise of the right of association in political matters, there is a last level. The partisans of the same opinion can meet in electoral colleges and name representatives to go to represent them in a central assembly. Strictly speaking, this is the representative system applied to a party.

So, in the first case, men who profess the same opinion establish a purely intellectual bond among themselves; in the second, they meet in small assemblies that represent only a fraction of the party; finally, in the third, they form, so to speak, a separate nation within the nation, a government within the government.[e] Their representatives, similar to the representatives of the majority, represent in themselves alone the whole collective force of their partisans; just like the representatives of the majority, they arrive with an

d. In the manuscript: "This type of association almost merges with freedom of the press."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "This sentence lacks clarity. The idea is not well developed, and its expression is not good. What is an association that merges with a liberty, a material thing with something not material?" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 48).

e. Note in the margin: "≠Government within the government. Printing there [illegible word (ed.)]. See conversation with Ingersol [Ingersoll (ed.)].≠" It concerns Charles J. Ingersoll. See George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 480–82.

appearance of nationhood and all the moral power that results from that. It is true that, unlike the representatives of the majority, they do not have the right to make laws; but they have the power to attack the laws that exist and to formulate in advance those that should exist.

I assume a people who is not perfectly used to the practice of liberty or among whom deep political passions are stirring. Alongside the majority that makes the laws, I put a minority that only attends to *preambles* and stops at *plans of action;* and I cannot keep myself from believing that public order is exposed to great hazards [<≠for man is made in such a way that, in his mind, there is only a step, the easiest of all to take, between proving that something is good and doing it.≠>]

Between proving that one law is better in itself than another, and proving that it must be substituted for the other, there is certainly a great distance. But where the minds of enlightened men see a great distance remaining, the imagination of the crowd no longer sees any. There are times, moreover, when the nation is almost equally divided between two parties, each claiming to represent the majority. If, next to the governing power, a power arises whose moral authority is almost as great, can we believe that it will limit itself for long to speaking without acting?

Will it always stop before the metaphysical consideration that the purpose of associations is to lead opinions and not to force them, to recommend law and not to make it?

The more I contemplate the principal effects of the independence of the press, the more I am convinced that among modern peoples independence of the press is the capital and, so to speak, the constituent element of liberty. So a people who wants to remain free has the right to require that the independence of the press be respected at all cost. But the *unlimited* freedom of association in political matters cannot be completely confused with the freedom to write. The first is both less necessary and more dangerous than the second. A nation can set limits on the first without losing control over itself; sometimes it must set limits in order to continue to be in control.

In America, the freedom of association for political ends is unlimited.

An example will show, better than all I could add, the degree to which it is tolerated.

You recall how the question of the tariff or free trade has stirred minds up in America. The tariff favored or attacked not only opinions, but also very powerful material interests. The North attributed a portion of its prosperity to the tariff; the South, nearly all of its misfortunes. It can be said that, for a long time, the only political passions that have agitated the Union have arisen from the tariff.

In 1831, when the quarrel was most bitter, an obscure citizen of Massachusetts thought to propose, in the newspapers, that all the enemies of the tariff send deputies to Philadelphia, in order to consult together about the ways to reestablish free trade. In a few days, the proposal circulated from Maine to New Orleans due to the power of the printed word. The enemies of the tariff adopted it ardently. They met everywhere and named deputies. Most of these were men who were known, and some of them were famous. South Carolina, seen afterward to take up arms in the same cause, sent sixty-three delegates on its behalf. The first of October 1831, the assembly, which, following the American habit, had taken the name "convention," formed in Philadelphia; it numbered more than two hundred members. The discussions were public and, from the first day, took on an entirely legislative character. The deputies examined the extent of congressional powers, the theories of free trade, and finally the various provisions of the tariff. At the end of ten days, the assembly dispersed after having drafted an address to the American people. This address stated: 1. that Congress did not have the right to pass a tariff and that the existing tariff was unconstitutional; 2. that the lack of free trade was not in the interest of any people, and particularly not the American people.

It must be recognized that, until now, unlimited freedom of association in political matters has not produced, in the United States, the harmful results that could perhaps be expected elsewhere. There, the right of association is an English import, and it has existed in America since the beginning. Today, the use of this right has passed into the habits and into the mores. [{perhaps today it has even become a necessary guarantee against parliamentary tyranny as well}].

In our time, freedom of association has become a necessary[f] guarantee against the tyranny of the majority.[g] In the United States, once a party has become dominant, all public power passes into its hands; its particular friends hold all posts and have the use of all organized forces. Not able to break through the barrier that separates them from power, the most distinguished men of the opposite party must be able to establish themselves outside of it; with its whole moral strength, the minority must resist the material power that oppresses it. So one danger is set against another more to be feared.

The omnipotence of the majority appears to me to be such a great peril for the American republics that the dangerous means used to limit it still seem good to me.

Here I will express a thought that will recall what I said elsewhere about town liberties. There are no countries where associations are more necessary, to prevent the despotism of parties or the arbitrariness of the prince, than those where the social state is democratic. Among aristocratic nations, secondary bodies form natural associations that stop the abuses of power.[h] In countries where such associations do not exist, if individuals cannot artificially and temporarily create something that resembles those natural associations, I no longer see any dike against any sort of tyranny; and a great people can be oppressed with impunity by a factious handful of individuals or by a man.

[≠There is a cause that is hardly suspected and that, in my view, renders political associations less dangerous in America than elsewhere; it is uni-

f. The manuscript reads "almost necessary."

g. Cf. note a for p. 402.

h. Aristocracy to democracy./

Aristocracies are *natural* associations that need neither enlightenment nor calculations to resist the great national association that is called the government. As a result they are more favorable to liberty than democracy is. It is possible for associations to be formed in a democracy, but by dint of enlightenment and talents; and they are never enduring. In general, when an oppressive government has been able to form in a democracy, it finds itself facing only isolated men and no collective forces. Hence its irresistible strength. What gives the judicial system that immeasurable force over the person on trial? It has the use of the forces of the entire society against one man. Extreme example of the power of association and the weakness of isolation (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 82).

versal suffrage. In Europe, associations act in two ways: by the material strength that their organization brings to them, or by the moral power given to them by the support of the majority that they always claim to represent. In the United States this last element of strength is lacking. In countries where universal suffrage is allowed, there is never a doubtful majority, because no party can establish itself as the representative of those who did not vote.

Thus, in America, associations can never pretend to represent the majority; they only aim to convince it. They do not want to act, but to persuade; in that, above all, they are different from the political associations of Europe.≠]

The meeting of a great political convention (for there are conventions of all types) can often become a necessary measure. Even in America, such a meeting is a serious event, one that the friends of their country can only contemplate with fear.

This was seen very clearly in the convention of 1831, where all the efforts of the distinguished men who were part of the assembly tended to moderate its language and to limit its objectives. Probably, the convention of 1831 exercised, in fact, a great influence on the mind of the discontented and prepared them for the open revolt that took place in 1832 against the commercial laws of the Union.

You cannot conceal the fact that, of all liberties, the unlimited freedom of association, in political matters, is the last one that a people can bear.[j] If unlimited freedom of association does not make a people fall into anarchy, it puts a people on the brink, so to speak, at every moment. This

j. Nations are not able in all periods of their history to bear the same degree of freedom of association. You find some peoples among whom the relative positions and the strength of parties make certain associations dangerous; among others, despotism has taken care to keep men in such great ignorance that they do not understand what can be done by associating together. Only time and the gradual development of free institutions can teach them.

The society that cannot take the right of association away from citizens without destroying itself is, therefore, sometimes required to modify it, depending on the times and mores (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 92–93).

See José María Sauca Cano, *La ciencia de la asociación de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1995).

liberty, so dangerous, offers guarantees on one point, however; in countries where associations are free, secret societies are unknown. In America, there are agitators, but not conspirators.

Different Ways in Which the Right of Association Is Understood in Europe and in the United States, and the Different Use That Is Made of That Right

After the liberty of acting alone, the liberty most natural to man is to combine his efforts with the efforts of his fellows and to act in common. So to me, the right of association seems almost as inalienable by nature as individual liberty. The legislator would not want to destroy it without attacking society itself. But if there are some peoples among whom the liberty to unite together is only beneficial and fruitful in prosperity, there are also others who, by their excesses, distort it and turn an element of life into a cause of destruction. It seemed to me that a comparison of the different paths that associations follow, in countries where the liberty is understood and in those where this liberty turns into license, would be useful both to governments and to parties.

Most Europeans still see the association as a weapon that is hastily made to try out immediately on the field of battle.

They join together for the purpose of talking, but the next thought, that of acting, preoccupies all minds. An association is an army; they talk in order to take stock and to come to life; and then they march on the enemy. In the eyes of those who compose the association, legal resources can appear to be means, but they are never the only means of success.

That is not the way the right of association is understood in the United States. In America, citizens who form the minority join together, first, to determine their number and, in this way, to weaken the moral dominion of the majority; the second objective of those associated is to test and, in this way, to discover the arguments most suitable for making an impression on the majority; for they always hope to attract the majority and then, in its name, to have the use of power. [≠So in America, the purpose of associations is to convince and not to compel.≠]

Political associations in the United States therefore are peaceful in their objective and legal in their means; and when they claim to want to triumph only through law they are, in general, speaking the truth.

On this point the noticeable difference between the Americans and us is due to several causes.

In Europe parties exist that differ so much from the majority that they can never hope to gain their support; and these very parties believe they are strong enough by themselves to struggle against the majority. When a party of this type forms an association, it does not want to convince, but to fight. In America, men[k] who are so removed from the majority by their opinion can do nothing against the power of the majority; all others hope to win it over.

So the exercise of the right of association becomes dangerous in proportion to how impossible it is for great parties to become the majority. In a country like the United States, where opinions differ only by nuances, the right of association can, so to speak, remain unlimited.

What still leads us to see, in freedom of association, only the right to make war against those governing, is our inexperience in liberty. When a party gains strength, the first idea that comes to its mind, as to that of a man, is the idea of violence. The idea of persuasion only comes later; it arises from experience.

The English, who are divided among themselves in so profound a way, rarely abuse the right of association, because they have used it longer.

In addition, among us, such a passionate taste for war exists that no undertaking, however insane, even if it must turn the State upside down, lacks adherents who see themselves as glorious for dying on the field of battle.

But of all the causes in the United States that work together to moderate the violence of political association, perhaps the most powerful is universal suffrage. In countries where universal suffrage is accepted, the majority is never in doubt, because no party can reasonably set itself up as the representative of those who have not voted. So the associations know, and everyone knows, that they do not represent the majority. This results from

k. The manuscript reads: "the parties."

the very fact of their existence; for, if they represented the majority, they would change the law themselves instead of asking for its reform.

The moral force of the government they are attacking is greatly increased; theirs, much weakened.

In Europe, there is hardly any association that does not claim to represent or believe it represents the will of the majority. This claim or this belief prodigiously increases their strength, and serves marvelously to legitimate their actions. For what is more excusable than violence in order to gain victory for the oppressed cause of right?

Thus, in the immense complication of human laws, sometimes extreme liberty corrects the abuses of liberty, and extreme democracy prevents the dangers of democracy.

In Europe, associations consider themselves, in a way, the legislative and executive council of the nation that cannot speak for itself; starting from this idea, they act and command. In America, where, in everyone's eyes, associations represent only a minority of the nation, they talk and petition.

The means used by associations in Europe agree with the end that they propose.

Since the principal end of these associations is to act and not to talk, to fight and not to persuade, they are led naturally to adopt an organization that is not at all civil and to introduce military habits and maxims. Thus you can see them centralize the control of their forces, as much as possible, and deliver the power of all into the hands of a very small number of men.[m]

The members of these associations respond to an order like soldiers at war; they profess the dogma of passive obedience, or rather, by uniting together, they have at one stroke made the complete sacrifice of their judgment and free will. Thus, within these associations, a tyranny often reigns that is more unbearable than the one exercised within the society in the name of the government that is attacked.

This greatly diminishes their moral force. In this way, they lose the sacred

m. In the margin: "≠They use legal resources as a stopgap means and not as the means.≠"

character attached to the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors. For how can he who, in certain circumstances, consents to obey slavishly a few of his fellows, to surrender his will to them and to submit even his thoughts to them, how can that man possibly claim that he wants to be free?

The Americans have also established a government within associations. But, if I can express myself in this way, it is a civil government. Individual independence plays a role. As in society, all men there march at the same time toward the same end. But no one is forced to march exactly in the same path. No one sacrifices his will and his reason; but his will and his reason are applied to making the common enterprise succeed.

CHAPTER 5

Of the Government of Democracy in America

I know that I am walking here on fiery ground. Each of the words of this chapter must in some respects offend the different parties dividing my country. I will, nonetheless, express my whole thought.

In Europe, we have difficulty judging the true character and permanent instincts of democracy, because in Europe there is a struggle between two opposite principles. And we do not know precisely what should be attributed to the principles themselves or to the passions that the conflict has produced.

It is not the same in America. There, the people dominate without obstacles; there are no dangers to fear or wrongs to revenge.

So, in America, democracy is given over to its own inclinations. Its pace is natural, and all its movements are free. That is where it must be judged. And for whom would this study be interesting and profitable, if not for us, who are dragged along each day by an irresistible movement and who march blindly, perhaps toward despotism, perhaps toward the republic, but definitely toward a democratic social state?

Of Universal Suffrage

I said previously that all the states of the Union had allowed universal suffrage. It is also found among populations situated at different levels of [{civilization}] the social scale. I have had the opportunity to see its effects in various places and among races of men made nearly strangers to each other by their language, their religion, or their mores, in Louisiana as in New England, in Georgia as in Canada. I noted that, in America,

universal suffrage was far from producing all the good and all the evil that are expected in Europe, and that, in general, its effects were other than those supposed.[a]

Of the Choices of the People and of the Instincts of American Democracy in Its Choices

In the United States the most outstanding men are rarely called to the leadership of public affairs.—Causes of this phenomenon.—The envy that animates the lower classes in France against the upper classes is not a French sentiment, but democratic.—Why, in America, distinguished men often move away on their own from political careers.

Many people in Europe believe without saying, or say without believing, that one of the great advantages of universal suffrage is to call men worthy of public confidence to the leadership of public affairs.[b] It is said that a people cannot govern itself, but always sincerely wants the good of the State, and its instinct hardly ever fails to point out those who are animated by the same desire and who are most capable of holding power.[c]

I must say that, for me, what I saw in America does not authorize me to think that this is so. Upon my arrival in the United States, I was struck

a. Marginal note: "≠For that I do not know what to do. The interests that divide men are innumerable, but truth is singular and has only one way to come about.≠"

b. "≠What is most important to a nation is not that those who govern are men of talent, but that they have no interests contrary to the mass of their fellow citizens≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 90).

c. Repetition of an argument from Montesquieu, who asserts in chapter II of book II of the *Esprit des lois:*

> The people are admirable for choosing those to whom they must entrust some part of their authority. In order to decide they have only things that they cannot ignore and facts that are tangible. . . . But would they be able to conduct a matter, to know the places, the occasions, the moments, how to profit from them? No, they will not. . . . The people, who have enough capacity to understand the management of others, are not fit to manage by themselves (*Œuvres complètes* [Paris: Pléiade, 1951], II, pp. 240–41. Cf. note e for p. 93).

with surprise to find out how common merit was among the governed and how uncommon it was among those governing.[d] Today it is a constant fact in the United States that the most outstanding men are rarely called to public office, and we are forced to recognize that this has occurred as democracy has gone beyond all its former limits. Clearly the race of American statesmen has grown singularly smaller over the past half century.

Several causes of this phenomenon can be indicated.

It is impossible, no matter what you do, to raise the enlightenment of the people above a certain level. Whatever you do to make human learning more accessible, improve the methods of instruction and make knowledge more affordable, you will never be able to have men learn and develop their intelligence without devoting time to the task.

So the greater or lesser facility that the people have for living without working sets the necessary limit to their intellectual progress. This limit is further away in certain countries, closer in certain others; but for there to be no limit, it would be necessary for the people not to have to be occupied with the material cares of life; that is, for them no longer to be the people.[e] So it is as difficult to imagine a society in which all men are very enlightened, as a State in which all citizens are rich; these are two correlative difficulties. I will admit without difficulty that the mass of citizens very sincerely wants the country's good. I go even further, and I say that, in general, the lower classes of society seem to me to mingle fewer calculations of personal interest with this desire than do the upper classes; but what they always more or less lack is the art of judging the means while sincerely desiring the end.

d. Why, when civilization spreads, do prominent men decline in number? Why, when learning becomes the privilege of all, do great intellectual talents become more rare? Why, when there are no more lower classes, are there not more upper classes? Why, when understanding of government reaches the masses, are great geniuses missing from the leadership of society? America clearly poses these questions. But who will be able to resolve them? (pocket notebook 3, 6 November 1831, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 188).

e. "As the cares of material life demand less time, the development of the intelligence of the people will be greater. The one concerned with none of these cares will always have an intellectual advantage over those who are obliged to be concerned with them" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 37).

What long study, what diverse notions are necessary to get an exact idea of the character of a single man! There the greatest geniuses go astray, and the multitude would succeed! The people never find the time and the means to give themselves to this work. They must always judge in haste and attach themselves to the most salient objects. As a result, charlatans of all types know very well the secret of pleasing the people, while their true friends most often fail. [<In most of the states of the Union I saw positions occupied by men who had succeeded in gaining them only by flattering the slightest passions and bowing before the smallest caprices of the people.>]

Moreover, it is not always the capacity to choose men of merit that democracy lacks, but the desire and the taste.

The fact must not be concealed that democratic institutions develop the sentiment of envy in the human heart to a very high degree, not so much because they offer each person the means to become equal to others, but because these means constantly fail those who use them. Democratic institutions awaken and flatter the passion for equality without ever being able to satisfy it entirely. Every day, at the moment when people believe they have grasped complete equality, it escapes from their hands and flees, as Pascal says,[f] in an eternal flight. People become heated in search of this good, all the more precious since it is close enough to be known, but far enough away not to be savored. The chance to succeed rouses the people; the uncertainty of success irritates them. They get agitated, grow weary, become embittered. Then, everything that is in some way beyond them seems an obstacle to their desires, and there is no superiority, however legitimate, that they do not grow tired of seeing.

Many people imagine among us that the secret instinct that leads the lower classes to keep the upper classes away from the leadership of public affairs as much as they can is found only in France. That is an error: the instinct that I am speaking about is not French, it is democratic. Political circumstances have been able to give it a particular character of bitterness, but they did not give birth to it.

In the United States, the people have no hatred for the upper classes of society; but they feel little goodwill toward them and carefully keep them

f. *Pensées,* number 390 in the Lafuma edition.

out of power; they do not fear great talents, but they appreciate them little.[g] In general, you notice that everything that arises without their support gains their favor with difficulty.

While the natural instincts of democracy lead the people to keep distinguished men away from power, an instinct no less strong leads the latter to remove themselves from a political career in which it is so difficult for them to remain entirely themselves, and to operate without debasing themselves. This thought is very ingenuously expressed by Chancellor Kent. The celebrated author about whom I am speaking, after giving great praise to the part of the Constitution that grants the nomination of judges to the executive power, adds: "The fittest men would probably have too much reservedness of manners, and severity of morals, to secure an elec-

g. Here Tocqueville seems to invoke the difference that Guizot and most of the *Doctrinaires* establish between democracy, the political form that destroys the legitimate inequality of intelligence and virtue existing among men and that leads to the despotism of the greatest number, and representative government that divides power according to reason. "Representative government therefore is not that of the numerical majority pure and simple, it is that of the majority of those who are capable (*des capables*)," writes François Guizot (*Journal des cours publics,* Paris: au bureau du journal, 1821–1822, vol. I, lecture 7, p. 98). If Tocqueville radically rejects Guizot's conclusion that makes the middle class the most capable class, his problem remains nonetheless the same: how to make the best govern? This question, which marks the entire history of political thought, had been explained in this way by Tocqueville to Louis de Kergorlay: "The most rational government is not the one in which *all* those interested take part, but the one that the most enlightened and most moral classes of society lead" (Letter from Yonkers, 29 June 1831, *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 234). Four years later, just after the publication of the first part of his book, Tocqueville wrote to Mill:

> It is much less a matter for the friends of democracy to find the means to make the people govern than to make the people choose those most capable of governing, and to give the people enough authority over the latter for the people to be able to direct the whole of their conduct and not the detail of actions or the means of execution. That is the problem. I am deeply persuaded that on its solution depends the future fate of modern nations (letter of 3 December 1835, *Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, pp. 303–4).

Tocqueville, however, seems only to repeat what Mill had written in his review of the first part of *Democracy:* "The best government [. . .] must be the government of the wisest" (John Stuart Mill, "De Tocqueville on Democracy in America," *London and Westminster Review,* 30, 1835, pp. 110–11). See Luiz Díez del Corral, "Tocqueville and the Political Thought of the Doctrinaires," *Alexis de Tocqueville. Livre du centenaire* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1960), pp. 57–70.

tion resting on universal suffrage" (*Kent's Commentaries,* vol. I, p. 272 [273 (ed.)].) This was published without contradiction in America in the year 1830.

This demonstrated to me that those who regard universal suffrage as a guarantee for good choices are under a complete illusion. Universal suffrage has other advantages, but not that one.

Of the Causes That Can Partially Correct These Democratic Instincts

Opposite effects produced on peoples as on men by great perils.—Why America saw so many remarkable men at the head of its public affairs fifty years ago.—Influence that enlightenment and mores exercise on the choices of the people.—Example of New England.—States of the Southwest.—How certain laws influence the choices of the people.—Indirect election.—Its effects on the composition of the Senate.

When great perils threaten the State, you often see people happily choose the citizens most appropriate to save them.

It has been remarked that, in pressing danger, man rarely remains at his usual level; he rises well above, or falls below. The same thing happens to peoples themselves. Extreme perils, instead of elevating a nation, sometimes finish demoralizing it; they arouse its passions without guiding them; and, far from enlightening its mind, they trouble it. The Jews still slit their own throats amid the smoking ruins of the Temple. But, among nations as among men, it is more common to see extraordinary virtues arise from very present dangers. Then great characters appear like those monuments, hidden by the darkness of night, that suddenly stand out against the glow of a fire. Genius is no longer averse to reappearing on its own, and the people, struck by their own dangers, temporarily forget their envious passions. Then, it is not uncommon to see celebrated names emerge from the electoral urn. I said above that in America the statesmen

of today seem[h] greatly inferior to those who appeared at the head of public affairs fifty years ago. This is due not only to laws, but also to circumstances. When America fought for the most just of causes, that of one people escaping from the yoke of another people; when it was a matter of having a new nation emerge in the world, all souls rose to reach the lofty goal of their efforts. In this general excitement, superior men courted the people and the people, embracing them, placed them at their head. But such events are rare; judgment must be based on the ordinary course of things.

If temporary events sometimes succeed in combating the passions of democracy, enlightenment and, above all, mores exercise a no less powerful and more enduring influence on its inclinations. This is clearly noticed in the United States.

In New England, where education and liberty are the daughters of morality and religion, where society, already old and long settled, has been able to form maxims and habits, the people, while escaping from all the superiorities that wealth and birth have ever created among men, have become used to respecting and submitting to intellectual and moral superiorities without displeasure; consequently, you see democracy in New England make better choices than anywhere else.

In contrast, as you descend toward the south, in the states where the social bond is less ancient and less powerful, where instruction is less widespread, and where the principles of morality, religion, and liberty are less happily combined, you notice that talents and virtues become more and more rare among those governing.

When, finally, you enter the new states of the Southwest, where the social body, formed yesterday, still presents only an agglomeration of adventurers or speculators, you are astounded to see what hands hold the public power, and you wonder by what force independent of legislation and men the State can grow and society prosper there.

h. The manuscript says "were."

There are certain laws of a democratic nature, however, that succeed in partially correcting these dangerous democratic instincts.

When you enter the House chamber in Washington, you feel struck by the vulgar aspect of the great assembly. Often your eye searches in vain for a celebrated man within the assembly. Nearly all its members are obscure persons, whose names bring no image to mind. They are, for the most part, village lawyers, tradesmen, or even men belonging to the lowest classes. In a country where instruction is nearly universal, it is said that the representatives of the people do not always know how to write correctly.[j]

[<If they speak, their language is usually without dignity and the ideas they express are devoid of scope and loftiness.>]

Two steps from there opens the Senate chamber, whose narrow enclosure contains a large portion of the famous men of America. You notice hardly a single man there who does not evoke the idea of recent celebrity. They are eloquent lawyers, distinguished generals, skilled magistrates, or known statesmen. All the words that issue from this [august] assembly would do honor to the greatest parliamentary debates of Europe.

What causes this bizarre contrast? Why is the nation's elite found in this chamber rather than in the other? Why does the first assembly gather so many vulgar elements, while the second seems to have a monopoly of talents and enlightenment? Both come from the people, however; both are

j. The manuscript says: "the representatives of the people do not know . . ."

Elections./

When the right to vote is *universal,* and deputies are *paid* by the State, the choices of the people can descend and stray to a singular degree.

Two years ago, the inhabitants of the district in which Memphis is the capital, sent to the House of Representatives of Congress an individual named David Crockett, who has no education, can scarcely read, has no property, no fixed abode, but spends his life hunting, selling his game to make a living, and living constantly in the woods. His competitor was a man of talent and moderate wealth who lost. Memphis, 20 December 1831 (YTC, BIIa, notebook E, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 274–75).

the result of universal suffrage, and, until now, no voice has been raised in America to maintain that the Senate might be the enemy of popular interests. So what causes such an enormous difference? I see only a single fact that explains it. The election that produces the House of Representatives is direct; the one producing the Senate is subject to two stages. The universality of citizens names the legislature of each state, and the federal Constitution, transforming each of these legislatures into electoral bodies, draws from them the members of the Senate. So the Senators express the result of universal suffrage, though indirectly. For the legislature, which names the Senators, is not an aristocratic or privileged body that derives its electoral right from itself; it is essentially dependent on the universality of citizens. In general it is elected by them annually, and they can always direct its choices by remaking it with new members. But it is sufficient for the popular will to pass through this chosen assembly in order, in a sense, to be transformed and to emerge clothed in more noble and more beautiful forms. So the men elected in this way always represent exactly the governing majority of the nation; but they represent only the elevated thoughts that circulate in its midst, the generous instincts that animate it, and not the small passions that often trouble it and the vices that dishonor it.

It is easy to see a moment in the future when the American republics will be forced to multiply the use of two stages in their electoral system, under pain of getting miserably lost among the pitfalls of democracy.[k]

I will have no difficulty in admitting it; I see in indirect election the only means to put the use of political liberty within reach of all classes of the people. Those who hope to make this means the exclusive weapon of one party, and those who fear this means, seem to me to be equally in error.

k. On the contrary, the seventeenth amendment to the American Constitution, approved 31 May 1913, establishes direct election of Senators, by regularizing in large part a preexisting situation, by which the second voters committed themselves to scrupulously following the desires expressed by the votes of the first voters.

Influence That American Democracy Has Exercised on Electoral Laws[m]

The rarity of elections exposes the State to great crises.—
Their frequency keeps it in a feverish agitation.—
The Americans have chosen the second of these two evils.—
Variableness of the law.—Opinion of Hamilton,
Madison and Jefferson on this subject.

When election recurs only at long intervals, the State runs the risk of upheaval at each election.

Parties[n] then make prodigious efforts to grasp a fortune that comes so rarely within reach; and since the evil is almost without remedy for candidates who fail, everything must be feared from their ambition driven to despair. If, in contrast, the legal struggle must soon be renewed, those who are defeated wait.

When elections follow one another rapidly, their frequency maintains a feverish movement in society and keeps public affairs in a state of constant change.

Thus, on the one hand, there is a chance of uneasiness for the State; on the other, a chance of revolution; the first system harms the goodness of government, the second threatens its existence.

The Americans have preferred to expose themselves to the first evil rather than to the second. In that, they have been guided by instinct much more than by reasoning, since democracy drives the taste for variety to a passion. The result is a singular mutability in legislation.

Many Americans consider the instability of the laws as a necessary consequence of a system whose general effects are useful.[o] But there is no one

m. In the margin: "I believe this small chapter decidedly bad. Hackneyed ideas."

n. "Political men" in the manuscript. The change was suggested by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 30).

o. Democracy-Aristocracy./
Legislative instability in America./
I have just found one of the strongest proofs of this instability in the laws of Massachusetts (the most stable state in the Union).

in the United States, I believe, who pretends to deny that this instability exists or who does not regard it as a great evil.

Hamilton, after having demonstrated the utility of a power that could prevent or at least slow the promulgation of bad laws, adds: "It may perhaps be said that the power of preventing bad laws includes that of preventing good ones. . . . But this objection will have little weight with those who can properly estimate the mischiefs of that inconstancy and mutability in the laws, which *form the greatest blemish in the character and genius of our governments"* (*Federalist,* No. 73.)[p]

"[The] facility and excess of lawmaking," says Madison, "seem to be the diseases to which our governments are most liable" (*Federalist,* No. 62).

Jefferson himself, the greatest democrat who has yet emerged from within the American democracy, pointed out the same perils.

> The instability of our laws is really a very serious disadvantage, he says. I think that we will have to deal with that by deciding that there would always be an interval of a year between the proposal of a law and the definitive vote. It would then be discussed and voted, without being able to change a word, and if circumstances seemed to require a more prompt resolution, the proposed law could not be adopted by a simple majority, but by a two-thirds majority of both houses.[1]

From 1803 to 1827, the administrative attributions of the Court of Sessions were changed many times in order to convey them to the Court of Common Pleas. See *Laws of Massachusetts,* vol. II, p. 98 (YTC, CVb, p. 24). The quotations included in the text follow.

p. This paragraph and the one preceding belonged to chapter VII of this second part (p. 407).

1. *Letter to Madison, 20 December 1787, translation of Mr. Conseil.*[q]

q. The second sentence reads differently in the French translation of Conseil (volume I, pp. 310–18; the citation is found on page 318).

Of Public Officials under the Dominion of American Democracy

Simplicity of American officials.—Lack of official dress.—All officials are paid.—Political consequences of this fact.—In America, there is no public career.—What results from that.

Public officials in the United States remain mixed within the crowd of citizens; they have neither palaces, nor guards, nor ceremonial dress [but they are all paid]. This simplicity of those who govern is due not only to a particular turn of the American spirit, but also to the fundamental principles of the society.

In the eyes of the democracy, government is not a good, but a necessary evil. A certain power must be accorded to officials; for, without this power, what purpose would they serve? But the external appearances of power are not indispensable to the course of public affairs; they needlessly offend the sight of the public.

Officials themselves are perfectly aware that, by their power, they have not obtained the right to put themselves above others, except on the condition of descending, by their manners, to the level of all.

I can imagine nothing plainer in his ways of acting, more accessible to all, more attentive to demands, and more civil in his responses, than a public figure in the United States.

I like this natural look of the government of democracy;[r] in this internal

r. In the manuscript: "I like this simple look . . ."
Hervé de Tocqueville:

I am afraid that a bit of the enthusiasm of a young man may be seen in this admiration for American simplicity. In our old Europe, there is often a need to catch the imagination by a certain pomp, and the simplicities of Louis-Philippe have attracted as much scorn as his villainies. The author is bold to pronounce himself categorically against one of the most general ideas. When you have this boldness, you must at least try to justify your opinion by an example whose truth is striking and perceptible to everyone. At the end of the second paragraph, which finishes with the words *solely to his own merit,* the example would have to be cited of jurors in tail coats who are more imposing than magistrates in red robes (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 24–25).

strength that is attached more to the office than to the official, more to the man than to the external signs of power, I see something manly that I admire.

As for the influence that official dress can exercise, I believe that the importance that it must have in a century such as ours is greatly exaggerated. I have not noticed that in America the official, by being reduced solely to his own merit, was greeted with less regard and respect in the exercise of his power.[s]

From another perspective, I strongly doubt that a particular garment leads public men to respect themselves when they are not naturally disposed to do so; for I cannot believe that they have more regard for their outfit than for their person.

When, among us, I see certain magistrates treat parties brusquely or address them with false courtesy, shrug their shoulders at the means of defense and smile with complacency at the enumeration of charges, I would like someone to try to remove their robe, in order to discover if, finding themselves dressed as simple citizens, they would not be reminded of the natural dignity of the human species.[t]

No public official in the United States has an official dress, but all receive a salary.[u]

Still more naturally than what precedes, this follows from democratic principles. A democracy can surround its magistrates with pomp and cover them with silk and gold without directly attacking the principle of its existence. Such privileges are temporary; they are attached to the position, and not to the man. But to establish unpaid offices is to create a class of rich and independent officials, to form the kernel of an aristocracy. If the

s. In the margin: "≠I do not even know if a particular costume does not make what is lacking in the one wearing it, more salient in the eyes of the public.≠"

t. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I believe this paragraph should be removed. It would be good if the book were to be read only by the French; but as it will probably be sought out by foreigners, I do not know if it is suitable to expose our base acts to them" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 25).

u. This paragraph is missing in the 1835 edition. It appears in the manuscript, but the wording is a bit different.

people still retain the right to choose, the exercise of the right then has necessary limits.

When you see a democratic republic make paid officials unsalaried, I believe that you can conclude that it is moving toward monarchy. And when a monarchy begins to pay unsalaried offices, it is the sure sign that you are advancing toward a despotic state or toward a republican state.[v]

So the substitution of salaried offices for unpaid offices seems to me to constitute, in itself alone, a true revolution.

I regard the complete absence of unpaid offices as one of the most visible signs of the absolute dominion that democracy exercises in America. Services rendered to the public, whatever they may be, are paid there; moreover, each person has, not only the right, but also the possibility of rendering them.

If, in democratic States, all citizens can gain positions, not all are tempted to try to obtain them. It is not the conditions of candidacy, but the number and the capacity of the candidates that often limit the choice of the voters.[w]

For peoples among whom the principle of election extends to everything, there is no public career strictly speaking. In a way men reach offices only by chance, and they have no assurance of remaining there. That is true above all when elections are annual. As a result, in times of calm,

v. Public offices./

Little power of officials, their large number, their dependence on the people, little *stability* in their position, the mediocrity of their emoluments, the ease of making a fortune in another way, fact that few capable persons aspire to the leadership of society, except in times of crisis.

Disposition that tends to make government less skillful, but that assures liberty./

Every position that demands a certain apprenticeship and a special knowledge must usually be poorly filled in America. Who would want to prepare at length to gain what a caprice or even the ordinary order of things can take away from you from one moment to another?" (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 4–5).

w. This paragraph does not appear in the manuscript. The following note is found in the margin: "≠Influence of election and of repeated election on the personnel of officials. More public careers in ordinary times. Example of the Romans ready for anything because elected.≠"

public offices offer little lure to ambition. In the United States, it is men of moderate desires who commit themselves to the twists and turns of politics. Great talents and great passions generally move away from power, in order to pursue wealth; and often someone takes charge of leading the fortune of the State only when he feels little capable of conducting his own affairs.

The great number of vulgar men who occupy public offices must be attributed to these causes as much as to the bad choices of democracy. In the United States, I do not know if the people would choose superior men who bid for their votes, but it is certain that the latter do not bid for them.

Of the Arbitrariness of Magistrates[2] under the Dominion of American Democracy[x]

Why the arbitrariness of magistrates is greater under absolute monarchies and in democratic republics than in limited monarchies.—Arbitrariness of magistrates in New England.

There are two types of government in which a great deal of arbitrariness is joined with the action of magistrates; it is so under the absolute government of one man and under the government of democracy.[y]

2. *Here, I understand the word* magistrate *in its broadest sense; I apply it to all those who are charged with executing the laws.*

x. "Put this chapter next to the one that deals with the despotism of the majority. Despotism and arbitrariness are two. For this chapter, see pocket notebook number 3, p. 15. All the main ideas are there. To find examples" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 74). See the note for 14 October 1831, pocket notebook 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 183.

y. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Yes, there can be a great deal of arbitrariness under the absolute government of one man. Under the regular government of democracy there is free will and not arbitrariness, which is very different. I observe that despotism as the author depicts it exists only in Turkey, but is found to this extent in no other European State" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 27). Hervé repeats this same observation about arbitrariness in other places (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 27 and 34).

This same result comes from almost analogous causes.

In despotic States, no one's fate is assured, not that of public officials any more than that of simple individuals. The sovereign, always holding in his hand the life, fortune and sometimes the honor of the men he employs, thinks that he has nothing to fear from them; and he leaves them great freedom of action, because he thinks he is assured that they will never use that freedom against him.

In despotic States, the sovereign is so in love with his power that he fears the constraint of his own rules; and he loves to see his agents go more or less haphazardly in order to be sure never to find among them a tendency contrary to his desires.

Nor in democracies does the majority fear that power will be used against it, because every year it can remove power from the hands of those to whom power has been confided. Able at every moment to make its will known to those who govern, the majority prefers to abandon them to their own efforts rather than to bend them to an invariable rule that, by limiting those who govern, would in a sense limit the majority itself.

You even discover, looking closely, that under the dominion of democracy, the arbitrariness of the magistrate must be still greater than in despotic States.

Hervé de Tocqueville:

This entire chapter is very obscure and the mind must work to follow the connection of ideas. That comes about partly because the author sometimes used certain words that do not exactly have the meaning that he wants to give them. Starting with the title, the word *arbitrariness* loses meaning, because arbitrariness is commonly understood as the action of a power that is placed or puts itself above the law, and acts without concern for legal prescriptions. Such is not the type of action of magistrates in America. The law leaves infinitely more to their judgment than anywhere else. But there is no arbitrariness there. I propose to put, in place of *arbitrariness, the free will of magistrates,* etc. Next, I do not know why the author struggles so much to tell us about despotic government, which is not in his subject, and throws himself into abstract though ingenious definitions in order to tell us a truth that could be expressed with less difficulty, to know that the Americans leave great latitude and great freedom of action to their magistrates, because frequent elections banish all fear of the abuse that they could make of it (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 26–27).

In these States, the sovereign can punish in a moment all the misdeeds that he notices, but he cannot flatter himself that he notices all the misdeeds that he should punish. In democracies, on the contrary, the sovereign is simultaneously omnipotent and omnipresent. You see, therefore, that American officials are much freer within the circle of action that the law traces for them than any official in Europe. Often the Americans limit themselves to showing officials the end toward which they must aim, leaving them with the authority to choose the means.

In New England, for example, the duty to draw up the jury list is referred to the *selectmen* of each town. The only rule that is stipulated is this: they must choose the jurors from among those citizens who enjoy the right to vote and who are of good reputation.[3]

In France, we would believe the lives and liberty of men at risk if we confided the exercise of so fearsome a right to an official, whoever he was.

In New England, these same magistrates can have the names of drunkards posted in taverns and, by penalty of a fine, prevent the occupants from providing them with wine.[4]

Such a censorial power would outrage people in the most absolute monarchy; here, however, people submit without difficulty.

Nowhere has the law left a larger portion of arbitrariness than in democratic republics, because there does not seem to be any reason to fear arbitrariness. You can even say that, as the right to vote expands and as the term in office becomes more limited, the magistrate becomes freer.

3. *See the law of 27 February 1813.* General Collection of the Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. II, p. 331. It must be said that afterward the jurors are drawn by lot from the lists.*

4. *Law of February 28, 1787. See* General Collection of the Laws of Massachusetts, *vol. I, p. 302. Here is the text:*

> *That the selectmen in each town shall cause to be posted up in the houses and shops of all taverners, innholders and retailers [. . . (ed.) . . .] a list of the names of all persons reputed common drunkards, [. . . (ed.) . . .] or common gamesters, misspending their time and estate in such houses. And every keeper of such house or shop, after notice given him, as aforesaid, that shall be convicted, [. . . (ed.) . . .] of entertaining or suffering any of the persons, in such a list, to drink or tipple, or game, in his or her house, [. . . (ed.) . . .] or of selling them spirituous liquor, as aforesaid, shall forfeit and pay [the sum of thirty shillings (ed.)].*

That is why it is so difficult to have a democratic republic become a monarchy. The magistrate, while ceasing to be elective, usually keeps the rights and preserves the customs of the elected magistrates. Then you arrive at despotism.[z]

Only in limited monarchies does the law, while drawing a circle of action around public officials, still take care at the same time to guide them at each step. The reason for this fact is easy to state.

In limited monarchies, power is divided between the people and the prince. Both are interested in having the position of the magistrate stable.

The prince does not want to put the fate of officials back into the hands of the people, for fear that the officials will betray his authority; on their side, the people are afraid that the magistrates, placed in absolute dependence on the prince, will help to crush liberty; so, in a way, the magistrates are made to depend on no one.

The same reason that leads the prince and the people to make the official independent, leads them to seek guarantees against the abuse of his independence, so that he does not turn against the authority of the one or the liberty of the other. Both agree, therefore, on the need to trace in advance a line of conduct for the public official, and find it in their interest to impose rules on him that are impossible for him to evade.

z. This idea is found in Montesquieu, who asserts: "There is no authority more absolute than that of a prince who succeeds the republic: for he finds himself with all the power of the people who were not able to limit themselves" (*Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* chapter XV, in *Oeuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1951, II, p. 150). In the *Republic* (Book VIII, 564), Plato had already noted that extreme liberty would necessarily be followed by extreme subjection.

Administrative Instability in the United States

In America, the actions of society often leave fewer traces than the actions of a family.—Newspapers, the only historical memorials.—How extreme administrative instability harms the art of governing.

Men hold power only for an instant and then are lost in a crowd that, itself, changes face every day; as a result, the actions of society in America often leave less trace than the actions of a simple family.[a] Public administration there is, in a way, oral and traditional. Nothing is put in writing, or what is put in writing flies away with the slightest wind, like the leaves of the Sybil, and disappears forever.

The only historical memorials of the United States are newspapers. If an issue happens to be missing, the chain of time is as if broken: present and past are no longer joined. I do not doubt that in fifty years it will be more difficult to gather authentic documents about the details of the social existence of the Americans of today, than about the administration of the French of the Middle Ages; and if an invasion of barbarians happened to surprise the United States, it would be necessary, in order to know something about the people who live there, to resort to the history of other nations.

Administrative instability began by entering into habits; I could almost say that today each person has ended up by acquiring the taste for it. No one is worried about what was done before. No method is adopted; no collection is assembled; no documents are gathered, even when it would be easy to do so. When by chance someone has them in his possession, he hardly holds onto them. Among my papers, I have original pieces that were given to me in the offices of the public administration in order to answer some of my questions. In America, society seems to live from day to day, like an army in the field. Yet, the art of administration is definitely a science;

a. Variant: "<≠. . . a singular instability in the course of administrative affairs. No one finishes what he began; no one hopes to finish what he begins.≠>"

and all sciences, to progress, need to link together the discoveries of different generations as they succeed each other. One man, in the short space of a life, notices a fact, another conceives an idea; this one invents a method, that one finds a formula; humanity gathers along the way these various fruits of individual experiences and forms the sciences. It is very difficult for American administrators to learn anything from one another. Therefore, they bring to the conduct of society the knowledge that they find widespread in society, but not the learning that is their own.[b] So democracy, pushed to its extreme limits, harms progress in the art of governing.[c] From this perspective, it is better suited to a people whose administrative education is already formed than to a people who are inexperienced novices in public affairs.

This, moreover, does not relate uniquely to administrative science.[d] Democratic government, which is based upon such a simple and natural idea, always supposes the existence of a very civilized and learned society.[5] At first you would think it contemporaneous with the earliest ages of the world; looking more closely, you easily discover that it could have come about only during the last.[e]

[If nations had begun with democratic government, I doubt they would ever have become civilized.]

b. In the margin: "≠Dem[ocratic (ed.)] government, the chef-d'oeuvre of civilization and enlightenment.≠"

c. "Legislative instability in America, its effects, its causes./

"Mutability of public officials. Madison proves very ingeniously that this mutability, apart from its recognized ill effects, diminishes the responsibility of officials. New proposition, *Federalist,* p. 271 [No. 63 (ed.)]" (YTC, CVb, p. 25).

"After the electoral system, a small chapter on legislative and administrative instability in America is absolutely necessary. Show how, since nothing has any follow-up, no one can finish what he began. In this way responsibility diminished instead of increased, as is believed (*Federalist,* p. 268 [No. 62 (ed.)])" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 27).

d. On Tocqueville and the science of administration, see Roland Drago, "Actualité de Tocqueville (Tocqueville et l'administration)," *Revue des sciences morales et politiques,* 139, 1984, pp. 633–49.

5. *It is unnecessary to say that here I am talking about democratic government applied to a people and not to a small tribe.*

e. In the margin: "Is this clear and developed enough? Ask G[ustave (ed.)] and L[ouis(ed.)]?"

Of Public Expenses under the Dominion of American Democracy

In all societies, citizens are divided into a certain number of classes.—Instinct that each of these classes brings to the management of the finances of the State.—Why public expenses must tend to increase when the people govern.—What renders the lavish expenditures of democracy less to fear in America.—Use of public monies under democracy.

Is democratic government economical? First of all, we must know to what we mean to compare it.

The question would be easy to resolve if we wanted to establish a parallel between a democratic republic and an absolute monarchy [v: despotic State]. We would find that public expenditures in the first are more considerable than in the second.[f] But this is the case in all free States, compared to those that are not free. It is certain that despotism ruins men more by preventing them from being productive, than by taking the fruits of production from them; it dries up the source of wealth and often respects acquired wealth. Liberty, in contrast, gives birth to a thousand times more goods than it destroys, and, among nations that know liberty, the resources of the people always increase faster than taxes.[g]

f. In chapter VIII of book III of the *Social Contract* (*Contrat social*), Rousseau had asserted, on the contrary, that the democratic form was the least costly.

g. Édouard de Tocqueville:

This entire paragraph seems to me to leave much to be desired. The first sentence presents, with the tone of affirmation, a proposition that is in no way evident; there have been and there still are very economical absolute monarchies; witness Austria, Prussia today. What I criticize most in this piece is that you seem to confuse two perfectly distinct things: the comparatively high level of public expenses and the sources of wealth; it is certain that generally the latter must increase with liberty; as for the reduction of public expenses, that is less sure. All that one can say is that, with an absolute government, economy can never be permanent because a prodigal prince may succeed an economical prince, but this economical prince can be found and is found often enough. So I would propose softening the beginning of this paragraph

What is important to me at this moment is to compare free peoples, and among the latter to note what influence democracy exercises on the finances of the State.

Societies, just as organized bodies do, follow certain rules in their formation that they cannot evade. They are composed of certain elements that are found everywhere and in all times.

It will always be easy to divide each people ideally into three classes.

The first class will be composed of the rich. The second will include those who, without being rich, live well-off in all things. The third will contain all those who have only few or no properties and who live particularly from the work provided to them by the first two classes.

The individuals included in these different categories can be more or less numerous, depending on the social state [added: and the laws]; but you cannot make these categories cease to exist.

It is evident that each of these classes will bring its own distinctive instincts to the handling of the finances of the State.

Suppose that the first makes the laws. Probably it will be little concerned with economizing public monies, because a tax that happens to strike a considerable fortune only takes what is superfluous and produces an effect that is little felt.[h]

and finishing the first page as follows: Still this principle can have some exceptions, *but what is beyond doubt is that despotism ruins peoples much more by preventing them from being productive than by taking the fruits of production from them.* That way the two ideas are distinct (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 6–7).

h. Édouard de Tocqueville:

This proposition can be and will be contested; in most States, the rich are not so *rich* as to be indifferent to the total amount of the tax that strikes their fortune. I do not even know if they have ever been seen to be so; and in France in the time of the great lords and great fortunes, it was the rich who screamed the most when taxes were increased. So this paragraph is applicable only to the class of courtiers that one tried hard to confuse with all of the nobility, but that had never been more than a very small portion. All the nobles of the provinces and the rich who did not dissipate their income at the court desired economy in finances and saw public expenses increase with great disgust (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 7).

Assume, on the contrary, that the middle classes alone make the law. You can count on the fact that they will not be lavish with taxes, because there is nothing so disastrous as a heavy tax that happens to strike a small[j] fortune.

It seems to me that, among free governments, the government of the middle classes must be,[k] I will not say the most enlightened, nor, especially, the most generous, but the most economical.[m]

Now I suppose that the last class is exclusively charged with making the law; I clearly see the chance for public expenses to increase instead of decrease, and this for two reasons.

Since the greatest portion of those who in that case vote the law have no taxable property, all the money expended in the interest of society seems to be only to their profit, never to their harm; and those who have some bit of property easily find the means to fix the tax so that it hits only the rich and profits only the poor, something that the rich cannot do in their case when they are in control of the government.

So countries in which the poor[6] would exclusively be charged with mak-

j. Hervé de Tocqueville: "The word *small* is badly used applying to the middle class. *Mediocre* or something equivalent should be used" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 11).

k. In the manuscript: ". . . the government of the middle classes is the most economical . . ."

Gustave de Beaumont: "I find the assertion presented in much too strong a form. Theoretically that appears true to me. And yet it is only a theory. I would put 'seems to be so by *its nature*'" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 20–21).

m. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> The assertion of the author is contradicted by the example of France. Never has more been wasted, never have there been larger budgets than since the middle class has governed. I will observe in passing that the government of the middle class is, at bottom, only a small aristocracy on a larger scale. Attached to democracy by number, to aristocracy by the insolence and harshness of the parvenu, this government would be well able to have the vices of both. I urge Alexis to reflect on this again (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 11).

6. *You clearly understand that here, as in the rest of the chapter, the word* poor *has a relative sense and not an absolute meaning. The poor of America, compared with those of Europe, could frequently appear rich; you can correctly call them the poor, however, when you contrast them to those of their fellow citizens who are richer than they.*[n]

n. Hervé de Tocqueville:

ing the law could not hope for great economy in public expenditures; these expenditures will always be considerable, either because taxes cannot reach those who vote, or because they are fixed so as not to reach them. In other words, the government of democracy is the only one in which the one who votes the taxes can escape the obligation to pay them.

You will object in vain that the well understood interest of the people[o] is to handle the fortune of the rich carefully, because it would not take long for the people to feel the effects of any difficulties caused. But isn't it also the interest of kings to make their subjects happy, and that of the nobles to know how to open their ranks opportunely? If long-term interest could prevail over the passions and needs of the moment, there would never have been tyrannical sovereigns or exclusive aristocracies.

You will stop me here, saying: Who ever imagined charging the poor alone with making the law? Who! Those who have established universal suffrage. Is it the majority or the minority that makes the law? Undoubtedly the majority; and if I prove that the poor always make up the majority, won't I be correct to add that in countries where the poor are called to vote, they alone make the law?

Now, it is certain that until now, among all the nations of the world, the greatest number has always been composed of those who had no property, or of those whose property was too limited for them to be able to live comfortably without working. So universal suffrage really gives the government of society to the poor.

The poor must be deleted everywhere; on the one hand, it does not present a sufficiently clear idea and, on the other hand, does not agree with the condition in America of the class that the author wants to indicate. He says further along that this class lives in affluence, and an effort must always be made to connect ideas to America. Without that, there would be no unity in the composition. I would put here in place of *poor, the country in which the last class that I named,* etc.

To the side, in the handwriting of Alexis de Tocqueville according to the copyist: "The word *poor* has a relative, not an absolute meaning. The American poor could often appear rich compared to those of Europe. But they [above: count as] are always the poor [above: the class of the poor] if you compare them to those of their fellow citizens who are richer than they" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 12).

o. The manuscript says "the lower classes."

The unfortunate influence that popular power can sometimes exercise over the finances of the State made itself clear in certain democratic republics of antiquity, in which the public treasury was exhausted to help indigent citizens, or to give games and spectacles to the people.

It is true to say that the representative system was almost unknown in antiquity.[p] Today, popular passions arise with more difficulty in public affairs; you can, however, count on the fact that, in the long run, the delegate will always end by conforming to the spirit of his constituents and by making their propensities as well as their interests prevail.

[This same tendency is even more noticeable in England with the poor tax, the only tax that is established by the people, that profits only them, and that has a democratic origin and object.]

The profusions of democracy are, moreover, less to be feared the more people become property owners, because then, on the one hand, the people have less need for the money of the rich and, on the other hand, they encounter more difficulties establishing a tax that does not hit them. From this perspective, universal suffrage would be less dangerous in France than in England, where nearly all taxable property is gathered in a few hands. America, where the great majority of citizens own property, is in a more favorable situation than France.

Still other causes can raise the sum of public expenditures in democracies.[q]

When the aristocracy governs, the men who conduct State affairs escape all needs by their very position; content with their lot, they ask above all

p. Of the principle of representation./
It is the principle of representation that eminently distinguishes modern republics from ancient republics.
Partially known in antiquity however. See *Federalist,* p. 273 [No. 63 (ed.)].
Superiority that it gives to the modern ones, practicability of the republic.
It tends to be weakened more and more in America.
Frequency of elections. Dependence of power on the people. Binding mandates. Public vote (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 5–6).

q. In the manuscript, what follows forms a section entitled: OTHER CAUSES THAT MAKE PUBLIC EXPENDITURES RISE HIGHER UNDER DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT THAN UNDER OTHERS.

for power and glory from society; and, placed above the anonymous crowd of citizens, they do not always see clearly how the general welfare necessarily works toward their own grandeur. It is not that they see the sufferings of the poor without pity; but they cannot feel the miseries of the poor as though they shared them themselves. As long as the people seem to be content with their own fortune, these men consider themselves satisfied and expect nothing more from the government. Aristocracy thinks more about maintaining than improving.[r]

When, on the contrary, public power is in the hands of the people, the sovereign power seeks everywhere for something better, because it has a sense of unease.

The spirit of amelioration then extends to a thousand different objects; it gets down to infinite details and is applied, above all, to types of amelioration that cannot be achieved except by paying; for it is a matter of improving the condition of the poor who cannot help themselves.

In addition there exists in democratic societies an agitation without a specific aim; a sort of permanent fever reigns there that turns toward all kinds of innovation, and innovations are nearly always costly.

r. In the manuscript: "When the aristocracy governs society, the only necessary care it has for the people is to prevent an uprising against it."

Hervé de Tocqueville:

> This sentence is harsh though true. But let us not forget that the violent acts of the Revolution came from the fact that this truth had penetrated the people too deeply. Let us not once again put on the foreheads of the upper classes this mark that has been so deadly to them. It is more than useless for Alexis to alienate himself from these classes. So this sentence must be cut or softened. It can be cut without disadvantage to what follows. Then the chapter would begin in this way: *When the governing power is placed in the people, the spirit of amelioration is extended to a host of objects.*
>
> If Alexis absolutely does not want to sacrifice it, this must be inserted: *The aristocracy has often been reproached for not having a care for the people,* etc. Then it is not he who pronounces and condemns; he is only reporting an opinion current in the world.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "This observation seems just to me" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 13–14).

Gustave de Beaumont: "Idea much too absolute that is suitable to modify" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 21).

In monarchies and in aristocracies, the ambitious flatter the natural taste that carries the sovereign power toward fame and power, and they often push it therefore toward great expenditures.

In democracies, where the sovereign power is needy, you can hardly gain its good will except by increasing its well-being; that can hardly ever be done except with money.[s]

Moreover, when the people themselves begin to reflect on their position, a host of needs arises that they had not felt at first and that can only be satisfied by turning to the resources of the State. As a result, public expenses seem generally to increase with civilization, and you see taxes rise as enlightenment spreads.[t]

Finally, a last cause often makes democratic government more expensive than another. Sometimes the democracy wants to economize on its expenditures, but it cannot succeed in doing so, because it does not have the art of being economical.

As the democracy frequently changes views and, still more frequently, changes agents, it happens that enterprises are poorly conducted or remain incomplete. In the first case, the State makes expenditures disproportionate

s. In the margin: *"Isn't this subtle?"*

t. In the manuscript, this paragraph finishes in this way: ". . . taxes generally increase with enlightenment; and public expenses with civilization which should seemingly make them almost unnecessary."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "This is nothing less than clear [*sic*]. I do not understand why civilization should make public expenses nearly unnecessary."

Édouard de Tocqueville: "Nor do I" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 14).

Hervé de Tocqueville:

> Here are two divisions of the chapter devoted to generalities. But the author comes to no conclusion, and the reader will not fail to complain about it. He proves very well that democratic government is and must be expensive. But he does not arrive at the application that is indispensable to justify a theory. Is American democratic government proportionately more expensive than another; are public expenditures higher there? Not only must the author say so, but he must also explain why, give certain examples. If he has refrained because he is going to do so later, he must indicate it here. It is impossible for this division to end in this way, in a vague way.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "That is very true" (YTC, CIII b, 2, p. 14).

to the grandeur of the end that it wishes to achieve; in the second, it makes unproductive expenditures.

Of the Instincts of American Democracy in Determining the Salaries of Officials

In democracies, those who institute large salaries do not have the chance to profit from them.—Tendency of the American democracy to raise the salaries of secondary officials and to lower those of principal officials.—Why this is so.—Comparative picture of the salary of public officials in the United States and in France.

One great reason leads democracies, in general, to economize on the salaries of public officials.

In democracies, since those who institute the salaries are very numerous, they have very little chance ever to get them.

In aristocracies, on the contrary, those who institute large salaries almost always have a vague hope to profit from them. These salaries are capital that they create for themselves, or at the very least resources that they prepare for their children.

It must be admitted, however, that democracy appears to be very parsimonious only toward its principal agents.

In America, officials of secondary rank are paid more than elsewhere, but high officials are paid much less. [{There are states in which the Governor receives less money as a salary than one of our sub-prefects.}]

These opposite effects are produced by the same cause; the people, in both cases, set the salaries of public officials. They think about their own needs, and this comparison guides them. Since they themselves live in great comfort, it seems natural to them that those who are serving them share it.[7] But when it is time to set the lot of the great officers of the State, this rule escapes them, and they proceed only haphazardly.

7. *The comfort in which secondary officials live in the United States is also due to another*

The poor man does not have a clear idea of the needs that the superior classes of society may feel. What would appear to be a modest sum to a rich man, appears to be a prodigious sum to the poor man who contents himself with what's necessary; and he considers that the Governor of the state, provided with his two thousand *écus,* should still be happy and excite envy.[8]

If you try to make him understand that the representative of a great nation must appear with a certain splendor in the eyes of foreigners, he will understand you at first. But when, thinking about his simple dwelling and about the modest fruits of his hard labor, he thinks about all that he could do with this very salary that you judge insufficient, he will find himself surprised and almost frightened by the sight of such riches.

Add that the secondary official is nearly at the level of the people, while the other towers above them. So the first can still excite their interest, but the other begins to arouse their envy.

This is seen very clearly in the United States, where salaries seem in a way to decrease as the power of the officials grows greater.[9]

cause. This one is foreign to the general instincts of democracy: every type of private career is highly productive. The State would not find secondary officials if it did not agree to pay them well. So it is in the position of a commercial enterprise, obliged, whatever its tastes for economy, to sustain a burdensome competition.

8. *The state of Ohio, which has a million inhabitants, gives the Governor only 1,200 dollars in salary or 6,504 francs.*

9. *To make this truth clear to all, it is sufficient to examine the salaries of some of the agents of the federal government.*[11] *I thought the salary attached, in France, to the analogous office should be placed in juxtaposition, in order for the comparison to enlighten the reader.*

United States	
Treasury Department	
Attendant	*3,734 fr.*
The lowest paid clerk	*5,420 fr.*
The highest paid clerk	*8,672 fr.*
Chief Clerk	*10,840 fr.*
Secretary of State [sic: of the Treasury]	*32,520 fr.*
The President	*135,000 fr.*

Under the dominion of aristocracy, on the contrary, high officials receive very large emoluments, while lower level ones often have hardly enough on which to live. It is easy to find the reason for this fact in causes analogous to those that we have indicated above.[w]

If the democracy does not imagine the pleasures of the rich man or envies them, the aristocracy from its perspective does not understand the miseries of the poor man; or rather it is unaware of them. The poor man is not, strictly speaking, similar to the rich man; he is a being of another species. So the aristocracy worries very little about the fate of its lower level agents. It raises their salaries only when they refuse to serve for too small a price.

The parsimonious tendency of democracy toward principal officials has caused great economical propensities to be attributed to democracy that it does not have.

It is true that democracy gives scarcely what is needed to live honestly to those who govern it, but it spends enormous sums to relieve the needs

France

Ministry of Finance	
Attendant of the Minister	*1,500 fr.*
The lowest paid clerk	*1,000 to 1,800 fr.*
The highest paid clerk	*3,200 to 3,600 fr.*
Chief Clerk	*20,000 fr.*
Minister	*80,000 fr.*
The King	*12,000,000 fr.*

Perhaps I was wrong to take France as the point of comparison. In France, where, daily, democratic instincts increasingly penetrate the government, you already notice a strong tendency that leads the Chambers to raise small salaries and above all to lower the large ones.[v] *Thus the Minister of Finance, who, in 1834, receives 80,000 fr., received 160,000 under the Empire; the general directors of finance, who receive 20,000, then received 50,000.*

u. In various articles about public expenditures in the United States and in France, which we will speak about later (see note j for p. 349), comparisons of this type abound.

v. "Ask Mr. Livingston if apart from the *clerks* in the American Treasury Department, there are still lower paid employees" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 11).

w. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I ask for the deletion of this paragraph and the following for the reason that I gave on page 135. They are, moreover, superfluous and entirely unnecessary, because the author is not treating aristocracy. In addition, they are written with a bitterness against the aristocracy that cannot come from the pen of Alexis and that will bring his impartiality into question" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 15). Cf. note r for p. 338.

or to facilitate the pleasures of the people.[10] That is a better use of the tax revenue, not an economy.

In general, democracy gives little to those who govern and a great deal to the governed. The opposite is seen in aristocracies where the money of the State profits above all the class that leads public affairs.

Difficulty of Discerning the Causes That Lead the American Government to Economy[x]

[≠In the silence of his study, the observer draws up general rules, and he believes that he has grasped the truth. But a fact, the first cause of which is often lost in the night, appears in his thoughts, and it seems to him that truth is escaping from him.≠]

The man who searches among facts for the real influence exercised by laws on the fate of humanity is exposed to great errors, for there is nothing so difficult to appreciate as a fact.

One people is naturally thoughtless and enthusiastic; another, reflective

10. *See among other items, in American budgets, what it costs for the support of the poor and for free education.*

In 1831, in the state of New York, the sum of 1,200,000 francs was spent for the support of the poor. And the sum devoted to public education was estimated to amount to 5,420,000 francs at least (William's New York Annual Register, *1832, pp. 205 and 243).*

The state of New York in 1830 had only 1,900,000 inhabitants, which is not double the population of the département du Nord.

x. Former title: THAT REASONS TAKEN FROM THE MORES OF A PEOPLE OFTEN DISRUPT OR MODIFY GENERAL ARGUMENTS.

Hervé de Tocqueville:

> The title [This concerns the definitive title (ed.)] of this division does not seem good to me for two reasons. First, it establishes a sort of contradiction with the preceding chapters, which established that democratic government is not economical; then the difficulty is suddenly resolved in the chapter. I propose changing this title and putting: OF THE CAUSES FOR THE ECONOMY OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT FOR CERTAIN OBJECTS. As for the rest, the chapter is very good. I will make only one observation to which I do not attach great importance; the author assumes preliminary knowledge in his reader. He reasons as if the reader already knew that the Americans like neither the luxury of festivals, nor that of buildings (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 16).

and calculating. This is due to their physical constitution itself or to distant causes that I do not know.[y]

You see peoples who love show, noise and pleasure, and who do not regret spending a million that goes up in smoke. You see others who value only solitary pleasures and who seem ashamed to appear contented.

In certain countries, a great price is attached to the beauty of buildings. In certain others, no value whatsoever is placed on objects of art, and what has no return is scorned. Finally, there are some in which fame is loved, and others in which money is placed before all else.

Apart from the laws, all these causes influence in a very powerful way the management of the finances of the State.

If the Americans have never happened to spend the people's money on public festivals, it is not only because, among them, the people vote the tax; it is because the people do not like to enjoy themselves.

If they reject ornament in their architecture and prize only material and real advantages, it is not only because they are a democratic nation, but also because they are a commercial people.

The habits of private life are continued in public life; and among the Americans the economies that depend on institutions and those that follow from habits and mores must be clearly distinguished.[z]

y. Fragment of a first version in the manuscript:

≠There is indeed in the bent of the ideas and tastes of a people a hidden force that struggles with advantage against revolutions and time. This intellectual physiognomy of nations, which is called their character, is found throughout all the centuries of their history and amid the innumerable changes that take place in the social state, beliefs and laws. A strange thing! What is least perceptible and most difficult to define among a people is at the same time what you find most enduring among them. Everything changes among them except the character, which disappears only with nations themselves.≠

z. In the margin: "≠The beginning of the chapter does not exactly correspond to the end. The beginning contains a general idea on national character; the end contains a clear and precise observation on what gives the Americans their character.≠"

[Influence of the Government of Democracy on the Tax Base {and on the Use of the Tax Revenues}][a]

[The form of government greatly influences the tax base. The instinct of the aristocracy[b] leads it to handle the producer carefully {and to burden the consumer} because the aristocracy holds the sources of wealth. It is the opposite for the democracy, which willingly takes on the producer and han-

a. "The advice of L[ouis (ed.)]. is that the ideas of this chapter are questionable, that in any case they are presented too succinctly and in a superficial way" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 90).

A first version of this part is found in YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 74–80; it presents numerous differences from the manuscript version. Notably, the opening of this draft states:

> I know that minds are much preoccupied with comparing the expenses of the United States with ours. If such were not the disposition of the public, I would not have done this chapter. For I am convinced that such a comparison is necessarily incomplete and, consequently, unproductive and that, were it complete, the truth would not be self-evident. It can be useful only to those who are looking for figures to support their ideas and not to those who want truth to emerge from figures (p. 74).

b. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> I do not believe the word *aristocracy* is very applicable here. The same thing would happen in a democracy in which the governing party was, in the majority, composed of owners of landed properties, large or small.
>
> This division has the same fault as one of the preceding ones; it leaves the reader almost completely wanting in terms of facts. We see clearly that the Americans have not wanted one tax, but you do not say what taxes they do want. A detailed account of this subject would be useless. But at least it would be necessary to tell us the nature of the taxes and to justify, with examples, the truth of the theory that the author is establishing. If by chance in America there was no contribution based on land, as I believe, and the producer was thus treated very carefully, then the chapter would come crashing down and it would have to be revised. I have a vague memory of having heard that there were only indirect taxes in America, and we know that indirect taxes weigh particularly on the consumer. I believe that the customs duties are the principal revenue of the American government (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 16–17).

dles the consumer carefully, because the resources of the people[c] scarcely reach the level of the ordinary prices of objects of consumption.

Among the English, land has not been taxed and indirect taxes have been multiplied. All the exemptions have been made in favor of the rich, while taxes that hit only the poor have always continued to grow. In America, when the legislature attempted to establish a tax on fermented liquors, a revolt ensued and in 1794 the legislature was forced to repeal the law.[*]

Only the despotism of one man is indifferent to the tax base. Its instinct leads it only to strike the taxpayer most able to give and least able to resist.][d]

[Influence of Democratic Government on the Use of Tax Revenues]

[The partisans of democracy claim that the government of democracy is more economical than any other, and I think they are mistaken. If they said, instead, that, of all governments, democratic government is the one that generally makes best use of tax revenues, they would put themselves, I believe, on their true ground.

c. Édouard de Tocqueville:

This sentence is completely unintelligible to me; the resources of the people hardly reach the level of the price of *the most ordinary objects of consumption* would seem understandable, but the thought still would not seem sound to me. Here you fall, I think, into the fault, almost inevitable for a European, of using the word *people* for low people or populace. Well, even in France the resources of the people, of the mass, often reach beyond the price of ordinary consumer objects, that is to say, food and clothing; with greater reason, can you say that in America, where the greatest comfort reigns for the mass, in such a country can you say that the *people* willingly take on the producer? I do not believe it, for they would be taking on themselves as consumers. The more economical the price of production, the more the objects of consumption fall within reach of the people; and when the latter have tasted these consumer objects, the objects become needs for them (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 9).

[*]. See Marshall, *Life of Washington,* and Pitkin.

d. Cf. Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois,* book XIII, chapter XIV, in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1951), II, pp. 467–68, and Rousseau, *Discours sur l'économie politique,* in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1964), III, pp. 241–78.

I spoke above about the squanderings of democracy {bread and spectacles the Romans of the decline would say}, but such excesses are rare and are ordinarily found during the centuries when enlightenment is weak and corruption very great. If the government of democracy levies more considerable sums on society than another government, it generally uses public monies for objects of a more certain and more extensive utility and uses them to relieve more real needs.[e] Incontestably, democracies have never built the palace of Versailles, nor based the political world on money as the aristocracy of England has done.[f]

Apart from its direct influence on the object of public expenditures, the government of democracy exercises still another influence, no less great, on how they are handled. Democratic institutions tend to make habits simpler and to remove, if not the taste for luxury and ostentation, the usual appendage to the inequality of fortunes, at least the possibility of indulging in that taste. As a result of this general spirit of the nation, expenditures are made on more modest and more economical plans.[g]

e. In the margin, under a paper glued into place: "≠It uses it for schools, for roads, for measures of order and health.≠"

f. To the side:

≠Democracy shows itself parsimonious toward its agents.

This is due to two causes.

The first is that the poor man, who then makes the law, measures by his own scale the needs of those who serve him. What appears to be a modest sum to a rich man, appears to be a prodigious sum to him who has nothing; and he feels that a public official [v: the Governor of the state], with his puny salary, should still be happy and excite envy. The second is that since those who institute the salaries are very numerous under the dominion of democracy, they have very little chance to get them.

This parsimony of democracy for the principal ones among its agents gives an illusion about its economical inclinations. But if it limits itself to giving public officials what is needed to live, it spends enormous sums to relieve the needs {to establish free schools} or to facilitate the pleasures of the people {to aid the poor}. It is a better use of the tax revenue, but not an economy. In general, democracy gives little to those who govern and a great deal to the governed, against aristocratic governments where the money .-.-.-.- above all the class that .-.-.-.- public affairs.≠

g. In the margin, under a paper glued into place: "Perhaps put at the end of the chapter, the chapter on mores placed above."

In all that precedes I have kept to subjects as a whole and not to details. I happened to notice many times in America that public expenditures were not applied to the most useful objects or that they were made without economy; but it appeared to me that these were particular cases and that they should be blamed much less on a natural tendency of the government of democracy than on the poor choice of its agents. For, of all masters, the people are assuredly the worst served.][h]

h. Hervé de Tocqueville:

I do not believe this idea developed enough. This last division of the chapter presents a great imperfection in my eyes. The good faith of the author leads him to admit that several facts in America contradict his theory. In several of the preceding divisions, facts, unstated, did not support the theory. Here, in certain respects, they are opposed to it. Alexis has too much wisdom not to sense that by operating thus, he gives a wide scope to criticism. Overall, he has changed his way of writing, and I regret it. In the first volume, facts led naturally to theory that seemed a natural consequence. Here theory precedes facts, and sometimes does without them; that is dangerous. The reader willingly submits to the author's opinion when it seems to be a deduction, so to speak, from facts, because then the author does not seem to want to impose his opinion. It would be otherwise if it preceded facts and, above all, if facts were lacking to support it. Then the intelligence of the author exercises over that of the reader a sway to which the latter does not always adapt and against which he sometimes takes a strong stand. I acknowledge with great pleasure that this last chapter is very well written and that it contains new and ingenious insights. But this merit does not compensate for the disadvantage of the absence of facts to support the theory.

In my opinion, every time Alexis is led to develop general insights, he must hasten to connect them to America. Without that, his work would lose its unity of composition, which is a major disadvantage in works of the mind. The reader glimpses in this case two aims without being able to set exactly the limits of each of the things that relate to each other; and a kind of confusion arises in his mind that forces him to a tedious effort that displeases him.

I have conscientiously examined if the paragraphs on aristocracy are necessary to establish a useful parallel between it and democracy. I am convinced of the opposite. Not only are they unnecessary, but they come as irrelevant, because aristocracy is in no way within the author's subject. There is no point, without a pressing need, in turning the upper classes against him. Alexis has been carried away by his natural frankness and also by a generous sentiment, that of knowing how to put himself above the prejudices of his class. All that he says was appropriate when the aristocracy was powerful. At present, I believe that one must abstain from doing it. I do not need to expand on the reasons.

Can the Public Expenditures of the United States Be Compared with Those of France[j]

Two points to be established in order to appreciate the extent of public expenses: national wealth and taxation.—Fortune and expenses in France are not known exactly.—Why you cannot hope to know fortune and expenses in the Union.—Research of the author to learn the total amount of taxes in Pennsylvania.—General signs by which you can recognize the extent of the expenses of a people.—Result of this examination for the Union.

Some have been much occupied recently with comparing the public expenditures of the United States with ours. All of these efforts have been without result, and a few words will suffice, I believe, to prove that it must be so.

To the side, written by Alexis, according to the copyist: "and that it (three illegible words) it would not have (illegible word) at State expense to buy the younger branches of certain families as the English aristocracy did" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 17–19).

Édouard de Tocqueville:

> *General observation.* This entire chapter needs, in my opinion, to be altered. Economic questions are not treated in it with enough assurance; there are several propositions that can be questioned. Certain thoughts are inadequately developed. All in all, I do not find this chapter at the same level as the preceding ones. The author here does not seem to be as perfectly in control of his subject (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 10).

j. This section does not exist in the manuscript; it does not appear in the criticisms of family and friends. It seems to have been included following a polemic on the economy of republican government, in which the United States was generally taken as the example. In September 1831, Sebastien L. Saulnier, official voice of the government, prefect of police and editor of the *Revue Britannique,* published "Rapprochements entre les dépenses publiques de la France et celles des États-Unis" (*Revue Britannique,* n.s., VI, 1831, pp. 272–324, reprinted in various publications), in which he claimed that the United States had an extremely expensive form of government and that American finances were consequently in chaotic condition. Since the moment for discussion in the Chamber of Deputies of the proposed budget for 1832 was at hand, Lafayette saw in this article an attempt on the part of the government to influence the parliamentary debate. He solicited the opinions of James Fenimore Cooper and of General Bernard, following which

In order to be able to appreciate the extent of public expenses among a people, two operations are necessary: first, you must learn the wealth of this people, and then what portion of this wealth they devote to State expenditures. The person who researches the total amount of taxes without showing the extent of the resources that must provide them, would be pursuing unproductive work; for it is interesting to know not the expenditure, but the relation of the expenditure to the revenue.

The same tax that a wealthy taxpayer easily bears will succeed in reducing a poor man to poverty.

The wealth of peoples is made up of several elements: real estate holdings form the first, personal property constitutes the second.[k]

he published a brochure that circulated among the deputies (*Le général Lafayette à ses collègues de la Chambre des députés,* Paris: Paulin, 1832, 68 pp.) The letter of Cooper had been published separately, in English (*Letter of J. Fenimore Cooper to Gen. Lafayette, on the expenditure of the United States of America,* Paris: Baudry, December 1831, pp. 50, iii, and also in the *Revue des deux mondes,* n.s., V, January 1832, pp. 145–82). Saulnier answered with two new writings: "Nouvelles observations sur les finances des États-Unis, en réponse à une brochure publiée par le Général Lafayette" (*Revue Britannique,* n.s., VIII, pp. 195–260), and a letter to the editor of the same review (n.s., IX, November 1833, pp. 164–94). In 1834, Francisque de Corcelle published an article, "Administration financière des États-Unis" (*Revue des deux mondes,* 3rd series, I, 1834, pp. 561–84), with new statistics obtained from an inquiry into the American financial system done by Edward Livingston. New data, Corcelle argued, would demonstrate that the Americans paid lower taxes than the French. The article by Corcelle had probably attracted Tocqueville's attention, because he wrote to D. B. Warden on 21 July 1834 (YTC, CId), asking him for "the brochures of Bernard, Lafayette and Cooper." Regarding this, the following note is also found in the drafts: "Brochure of General Bernard and of Mr. Cooper on the finances of the United States appeared in the middle of 1831. I believe that General Lafayette's aide-de-camp published something on the same subject" (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 21–22). See note 51 for p. 156.

k. In the 1835 edition: "The wealth of peoples is made up of several elements: population is the first; real estate holdings form the second, and personal property constitutes the third.

"Of these three elements, the first is easily discovered. Among civilized peoples you can easily reach an exact count of the citizens; but it is not the same with the other two. It is difficult to . . ."

The correction is probably due to a criticism from Nassau William Senior in a letter to Tocqueville of 17 February 1835:

> I cannot think that population is an element of wealth. It may rather be said to be an element of poverty. The wealth or poverty of the *people* of a country depends on

It is difficult to know the extent of land suitable for cultivation that a nation possesses and its natural or acquired value. It is still more difficult to estimate all of the personal property that a people has at its disposal. Personal property, because of its diversity and amount, eludes almost all efforts of analysis.

Consequently we see that the oldest civilized nations of Europe, even those in which the administration is centralized, have not yet established the state of their wealth in any precise way.

In America, no one has even conceived the idea of trying. And how could you think to succeed in this new country where society has not yet peacefully and finally settled down, where the national government does not find at its disposal, as ours does, a multitude of agents whose efforts can be simultaneously commanded and directed; where, finally, statistics are not studied, because no one is found who has the power to gather the documents or the time to look through them?

So the constituent elements of our calculations cannot be obtained. We do not know the comparative wealth of France and of the Union. The wealth of the one is not yet known, and the means to establish that of the other do not exist.

But, for a moment, I agree to put aside this necessary term of comparison; I give up knowing the relationship of tax to revenue, and I limit myself to wanting to establish what the taxes are.

The reader is going to recognize that by narrowing the circle of my research, I have not made my task easier.

I do not doubt that the central administration of France, aided by all the officials at its disposal, might succeed in discovering exactly the total amount of direct or indirect taxes that weigh upon the citizens. But this

the proportion between their numbers and the aggregate wealth of that country. Diminish their numbers, the wealth remaining the same, and they will be, individually, richer. The people of Ireland, and indeed of England, would be richer if they were fewer. I do call a country like China, where there is an immense population, individually poor, a rich country, though the aggregate wealth of China is greater than the aggregate wealth of Holland, where the population is, comparatively, individually rich (*Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with Nassau William Senior,* London: Henry S. King & Co., 1872, I, p. 4).

work, which an individual cannot undertake, the French government itself has not yet finished, or at least it has not made the results known. We know what the State expenses are; the total of the departmental expenses is known; we do not know what happens in the French towns. So no one can say, as of now, what amount public expenditures in France total.

If I now return to America, I notice difficulties that become more numerous and more insurmountable. The Union makes public the exact amount of its expenses; I can obtain for myself the individual budgets of the twenty-four states that constitute the Union; but who will teach me what the citizens spend for the administration of the county and of the town?[11]

Federal authority cannot extend to forcing the provincial governments to enlighten us on this point; and if these governments themselves wanted to lend us simultaneously their support, I doubt that they would be able to satisfy us. Apart from the natural difficulty of the enterprise, the political

11. *The Americans, as you see, have four types of budgets: The Union has its; the states, counties, and towns have theirs as well. During my stay in America, I did extensive research to know the total amount of public expenditures in the towns and in the counties of the principal states of the Union. I was able easily to obtain the budget of the largest towns, but it was impossible for me to get that of the small towns. So I cannot form any exact idea of town expenditures. For what concerns the expenditures of the counties, I possess some documents that, though incomplete, are perhaps the kind that are worthy of the reader's curiosity. I owe to the goodness of Mr. Richards, former*[m] *mayor of Philadelphia, the budgets of thirteen counties of Pennsylvania for the year 1830, those of Lebanon, Center, Franklin, Fayette, Montgomery, Luzerne, Dauphin, Butler, Alleghany [Allegheny (ed.)], Columbia, Northumberland, Northampton, Philadelphia. In 1830, there were 495,207 inhabitants. If you cast your eyes on a map of Pennsylvania, you will see that these thirteen counties are dispersed in all directions and subject to all the general causes that can influence the state of a country; so that it would be impossible to say why they would not provide an exact idea of the financial state of the counties of Pennsylvania. Now, these very counties spent, during the year 1830, 1,808,221 francs, which yields 3.64 fr. per inhabitant. I calculated that each of the same inhabitants, during the year 1830, devoted to the needs of the federal Union 12.70 fr., and 3.80 fr. to those of Pennsylvania; the result is that in the year 1830 the same citizens gave to society, to meet all public expenditures (except town expenditures), the amount of 20.14 fr. This result is doubly incomplete, as you see, because it applies only to a single year and to one part of public expenses; but it has the merit of being certain.*

m. The word "former" appears only after the first editions.

organization of the country would still conflict with the success of their efforts. The magistrates of the town and of the county are not appointed by administrators of the state, and do not depend on them. So it may be believed that if the state wanted to obtain the information we need, it would meet great obstacles in the carelessness of the lower level officials it would be forced to use.[12]

Useless, moreover, to try to find out what the Americans would be able to do in such a matter, because certainly until now they have done nothing.

So today in America or in Europe not a single man exists who can teach us what each citizen of the Union pays annually to meet the expenses of society.[13]

12. *Those who have wanted to establish a parallel between the expenditures of the Americans and ours have clearly felt that it was impossible to compare the total of the public expenditures of France to the total of the public expenditures of the Union; but they have sought to compare detached portions of these expenditures. It is easy to prove that this second way of operating is no less defective than the first.*

To what will I compare, for example, our national budget? To the budget of the Union? But the Union is occupied with far fewer objects than our central government, and its expenses must naturally be much less. Will I contrast our departmental budgets to the budgets of the individual states that make up the Union? But in general the individual states attend to more important and more numerous interests than the administration of our departments; so their expenditures are naturally more considerable. As for the budgets of the counties, you find nothing in our system of finance that resembles them. Will we add expenditures made there to the budget of the state or to that of the towns? Town expenditures exist in the two countries, but they are not always analogous. In America, the town assumes several needs that in France are left to the department or to the State. How, moreover, must town expenditures in America be understood? The organization of the town differs depending on the states. Will we take as the rule what happens in New England or in Georgia, in Pennsylvania or in the state of Illinois?

It is easy to see, between certain budgets of two countries, a sort of analogy; but since the elements that constitute them always differ more or less, you cannot establish a serious comparison between them.

13. *Should you succeed in knowing the precise sum that each French or American citizen pays into the public treasury, you would still have only one part of the truth.*

Governments ask not only money from the taxpayers, but also personal efforts that have a monetary value. The State raises an army; apart from the balance that is charged to the entire nation to supply it, the soldier must still give his time, which has a greater or lesser value depending on the use that he would make of it if he remained free. I will say as much about the service of the militia. The man who is part of the militia temporarily devotes a precious

Let us conclude that it is as difficult to compare fruitfully the social expenditures of the Americans with ours, as it is to compare the wealth of the Union to that of France. I add that it would even be dangerous to attempt it. When statistics are not based on rigorously true calculations, they mislead rather than guide. The mind is easily led astray by the false air of exactitude that statistics conserve even in their discrepancies, and it rests untroubled in the errors that it thinks are cloaked in the mathematical forms of truth.

So let us abandon numbers and try to find our proof elsewhere.

Does a country present an aspect of material prosperity; after paying the State, does the poor man still have resources and the rich man superfluity; do both appear satisfied with their lot, and do they still seek to improve it each day, so that industry never lacks capital and capital in turn does not lack industry? Lacking positive documents, it is possible to resort to such indicators to know if the public expenses that burden a people are proportionate to its wealth.

The observer who kept to this evidence would undoubtedly judge that the American of the United States gives to the State a less significant portion of his income than the Frenchman.

But how could you imagine that it would be otherwise?

time to public security, and really gives to the State what he fails to acquire for himself. I have cited these examples; I would have been able to cite many others. The government of France and that of America collect taxes of this nature; these taxes burden the citizens. But who can appreciate with exactitude their total amount in the two countries?

This is not the last difficulty that stops you when you want to compare the public expenditures of the Union to ours. The State has certain obligations in France that it does not assume in America, and reciprocally. The French government pays the clergy; the American government leaves this concern to the faithful. In America, the State takes care of the poor; in France, it leaves them to the charity of the public. We give all our officials a fixed salary; the Americans allow them to collect certain fees. In France, service charges occur only on a small number of roads; in the United States, on nearly all roads. Our roads are open to travelers who can travel on them without paying anything; in the United States there are many toll roads. All these differences in the way in which the taxpayer acquits himself of the expenses of the society make comparison between the two societies very difficult; for there are certain expenditures that the citizens would not make or that would be less, if the State did not take it upon itself to act in their name.

One part of the French debt is the result of two invasions; the Union has nothing to fear about that. Our position obliges us as a rule to keep a numerous army under arms; the isolation of the Union allows it to have only 6,000 soldiers. We maintain nearly 300 ships; the Americans have only 52[14] of them. How could the inhabitant of the Union pay to the State as much as the inhabitant of France?

So there is no parallel to establish between the finances of countries so differently placed.

It is by examining what happens in the Union, and not by comparing the Union with France, that we can judge if American democracy is truly economical.

I cast my eyes on each of the various republics that form the confederation, and I discover that their government often lacks perseverance in its designs, and that it does not exercise continuous surveillance over the men it employs. From this I naturally draw the conclusion that it must often spend the money of the taxpayers uselessly, or devote more of their money than necessary to its undertakings.

I see that, faithful to its popular origin, it makes prodigious efforts to satisfy the needs of the lower classes of society, to open the paths to power to them, and to spread well-being and enlightenment among them. It supports the poor, distributes millions each year to the schools, pays for all services, and generously recompenses its least important agents. If such a means of governing seems useful and reasonable to me, I am forced to recognize that it is expensive.

I see the poor man who leads public affairs and has national resources at his disposal; and I cannot believe that, profiting from State expenditures, he does not often drag the State into new expenditures.

So I conclude, without resorting to incomplete figures and without wanting to establish risky comparisons, that the democratic government of the Americans is not, as is sometimes claimed, an inexpensive govern-

14. *See the detailed budgets of the Ministry of the Navy in France, and for America, the* National Calendar *of 1833, p. 228.*[n]

n. The budget of the American navy is found on pages 290–91. On page 228, the list of warships is found; the total is 53 (Tocqueville seems to have eliminated from the list a barge, a small unarmed galley with about twenty oars aboard).

ment; and I am not afraid to predict that, if great difficulties came one day to assail the peoples of the United States, you would see taxes among them rise as high as in most of the aristocracies or monarchies of Europe.

Of the Corruption and Vices of Those Who Govern in Democracy; Of the Effects on Public Morality That Result from That Corruption and Those Vices

In aristocracies, those who govern sometimes seek to corrupt.—Often, in democracies, they prove to be corrupt themselves.—In the first, vices directly attack the morality of the people.—In the second, vices exercise an indirect influence on the morality of the people that is still more to be feared.

Aristocracy and democracy mutually reproach each other with facilitating corruption; it is necessary to distinguish.

In aristocratic governments, the men who come to public affairs are rich men who only want power. In democracies, the statesmen are poor and have their fortune to make.

It follows that, in aristocratic States, those who govern are not very open to corruption and have only a very moderate taste for money, while the opposite happens among democratic peoples.

But, in aristocracies, since those who want to arrive at the head of public affairs have great riches at their disposal, and since the number of those who can make them succeed is often circumscribed within certain limits, the government finds itself, in a way, up for sale.[o] In democracies, on the

o. Hervé de Tocqueville:

It is clear that in this picture the author has England in view, but all aristocracies are not like that of England, which, however omnipotent it is, needs the people. There were other aristocracies, such as that of Venice and I believe that of Berne, that were self-sufficient, the people remaining outside; was corruption at work in the last ones? The author cites a mixed government rather than a clear-cut aristocracy. Some would probably object to him about it; to avoid it I would like him to put: "in aristocracies *in which the popular vote is necessary"* (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 5).

contrary, those who aspire to power are hardly ever rich, and the number of those who contribute to gaining power is very great. Perhaps, in democracies, men are for sale no less, but there are hardly any buyers, and, besides, too many people would have to be bought at once to achieve the end. [≠As a result of this difference, in democracies corruption acts upon those who govern and in aristocracies upon the governed. In the one, public officials are corrupted; in the other, the people themselves.≠

Thus, corruption finds some way to be exercised in the two governments: its object alone varies.]

Among the men[p] who have occupied power in France during the past forty years, several have been accused of having made a fortune at the expense of the State and its allies; a reproach that was rarely made to the public men of the old monarchy. But, in France, there is almost no example of someone buying the vote of an elector for money,[q] while this is notoriously and publicly done in England.

[In aristocracies corruption is generally exercised in order to gain power. In democracies it is linked to those who have gained power. So in demo-

p. In the manuscript: "Nearly all the men . . ."
Édouard de Tocqueville (?):

> That reproach was not addressed to anyone during the fifteen years of the Restoration. I do not know if it was generally addressed to Bonaparte's ministers, M. de Talleyrand excepted, although it was addressed to his generals. So we are left then with the ministers of the Republic and, above all, those of the Directory. A great number of the ministers of the Restoration entered power poor and still remain so. So you cannot with justice say: *during the past forty years nearly all the men,* etc. Couldn't you say: "Nearly all the men who have occupied power after the establishment of the French republic and during its existence, that is to say, when citizens, until then obscure and poor, suddenly found themselves carried to the head of public affairs, nearly all these men, I say, have been accused . . ."? (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 4).

Hervé de Tocqueville: "In this paragraph what Alexis says is not true. Most of the ministers since the Directory were beyond suspicion of mischief, and several ministers under the old regime were regarded as great knaves" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 5).

q. Hervé de Tocqueville: "It is true that they are rarely bought for cash money, but often enough by the lure of places or other advantages, which is a corruption that differs only by the means. The government candidate at Cherbourg had promised the same place of *juge de paix* to 15 persons" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 6).

cratic States corruption harms the public treasury more than the morality of the people. It is the opposite in aristocracies.]

I have never heard it said that in the United States someone used his riches to win over the governed; but I have often seen the integrity of public officials called into question. Still more often I have heard their success attributed to low intrigues or to guilty maneuvers.

[It must be said, moreover, that the result is not as fearsome in America as it would be in Europe.

Great robberies can only be practiced among powerful democratic nations in which the government is concentrated in few hands and in which the State is charged with executing immense enterprises.][r]

So if the men who lead aristocracies sometimes seek to corrupt, the heads of democracies are corrupted themselves. In the one, the morality of the people is directly attacked; in the other, an indirect action is exerted on the public conscience that must be feared even more.

Among democratic peoples, those who head the State are almost always exposed to deplorable suspicions; so they give the support of the government, in a way, to the crimes of which they are accused. Thus they present dangerous examples to still struggling virtue, and provide glorious comparisons to hidden vice.

You would say in vain that dishonest passions are met at all levels; that they often accede to the throne by the right of birth; that deeply despicable men can thus be found at the head of aristocratic nations as well as within democracies.

This response does not satisfy me. In the corruption of those who gain power by chance, something crude and vulgar is disclosed that makes it contagious to the crowd; on the contrary, there reigns, even in the deprav-

r. Édouard de Tocqueville (?): "What, so the United States is not a *powerful democratic nation?* And then the word *robbery* seems inadmissible to me in an elevated style; *great misappropriations* or *great embezzlements* is needed. Finally, how can power be concentrated in few hands in a *democratic nation?* That to me would seem impossible. This small paragraph must be revised" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, pp. 4–5).

What follows this paragraph, until the end of the section, does not exist in the manuscript.

ities of great lords, a certain aristocratic refinement, an air of grandeur that often prevents its spread.[s]

The people will never penetrate the dark labyrinth of court spirit; it will always be difficult for them to discover the baseness hidden beneath the elegance of manners, the pursuit of taste, and the grace of language. But to rob the public treasury or to sell State favors for money, that the first wretch understands and can claim to be able to do in turn.

What is to be feared, moreover, is not so much the sight of the immorality of the great as that of immorality leading to greatness. In democracy, simple citizens see a man who emerges from their ranks and who in a few years achieves wealth and power; this spectacle excites their surprise and envy; they try to find out how the one who was their equal yesterday is today vested with the right to lead them. To attribute his elevation to his talents or his virtues is uncomfortable, for it means admitting that they themselves are less virtuous and less skillful than he. So they place the principal cause in some of his vices, and often they are right to do so. In this way, I do not know what odious mixture of the ideas of baseness and power, of unworthiness and success, of utility and dishonor comes about.

s. "There, I confuse two things: corruption and embezzlements.

"There is corruption when you seek to obtain something which is not your due by sharing some stake with the one who gives it.

"There is corruption on the part of the candidate who pays for the votes of the voter.

"There is corruption on the part of the individual who obtains a favor from an official for money.

"But when officials draw for their own account from the State treasury, it is not corruption; it is *theft*" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 88).

Of What Efforts Democracy Is Capable

The Union has fought for its existence only a single time.—Enthusiasm at the beginning of the war.—Cooling at the end.—Difficulty of establishing conscription or registration of sailors in America.—Why a democratic people is less capable than another of great sustained efforts.

I forewarn the reader that here I am speaking about a government that follows the real will of the people, and not about a government that restricts itself only to commanding in the name of the people.

There is nothing so irresistible as a tyrannical power that commands in the name of the people, because, while vested with the moral power that belongs to the will of the greatest number, it acts at the same time with the decisiveness, promptitude and tenacity that a single man would have.

It is quite difficult to say what degree of effort a democratic government is capable of in time of national crisis.

A great democratic republic has never been seen until now. It would be an insult to republics to give this name to the oligarchy that reigned over France in 1793.[t] The United States alone presents this new spectacle.

Now, since the Union was formed a half-century ago, its existence has been put in question only once, at the time of the War of Independence. At the beginning of this long war, there were extraordinary acts of enthusiasm for serving the country.[15] But as the struggle continued, you saw individual egoism reappear. Money no longer arrived at the public treasury; men no longer presented themselves for the army; the people still wanted independence, but they drew back from the means to obtain

t. Variant in the margin, under a paper glued into place: "The name republic given to the oligarchy of 1793 has never been anything except a bloody veil behind which was hidden the tyranny of some and the oppression of all."

15. *One of the most singular, in my opinion, was the resolution by which the Americans temporarily renounced the use of tea. Those who know that men generally cling more to their habits than to their life will undoubtedly be astonished by this great and obscure sacrifice obtained from an entire people.*

it.[*] [≠This languor of public spirit, the only motivating force [doubtful reading (ed.)] of democracies, put the liberty of America in danger several times, and yet the nature of the country alone and its expanse made conquest impossible.≠] "Tax laws have in vain been multiplied; new methods to enforce the collection have in vain been tried," says Hamilton in the *Federalist* (No. 12):

> the public expectation has been uniformly disappointed, and the treasuries of the States have remained empty. The popular system of administration, inherent in the nature of popular government, coinciding with the real scarcity of money incident to a languid and mutilated state of trade, has hitherto defeated every experiment for extensive collections, and has at length taught the different legislatures the folly of attempting them.

Since this period, the United States has not had to sustain a single serious war.

To judge what sacrifices democracies know how to impose on themselves, we must therefore await the time when the American nation will be forced to put into the hands of its government half of the revenue of its property, like England, or must throw one twentieth of its population all at once onto the field of battle, as France did.

In America, conscription is unknown; men are enrolled there for money. Forced recruitment is so contrary to the ideas and so foreign to the habits of the people of the United States that I doubt that anyone would ever dare to introduce it in the laws. What is called conscription in France assuredly is the heaviest of our taxes; but, without conscription, how would we be able to sustain a great continental war?

The Americans have not adopted English impressment. They have nothing that resembles our registration of sailors. The navy, like the merchant marine, recruits by voluntary enlistments.

Now, it is not easy to conceive that a people could sustain a great maritime war without resorting to one of the two means indicated above. Consequently, the Union, which has already fought with glory at sea, has never

[*]. See the *Life of Washington* by Marshall.

had large fleets, and the cost of manning the small number of its ships has always been very expensive.

I have heard American statesmen admit that the Union will have difficulty maintaining its rank on the seas, if it does not resort to impressment or to registration of sailors; but the difficulty is to force the people, who govern, to bear impressment or registration of sailors.[u]

Incontestably, free peoples, when in danger, generally display an infinitely greater energy than those who are not free, but I am led to believe that this is true, above all, for free peoples among whom the aristocratic element predominates.[v]

Democracy seems to me much more appropriate for leading a peaceful society, or for making a sudden and vigorous effort as needed, than for braving for a long time the great storms in the political lives of peoples. The reason for it is simple. Men expose themselves to dangers and privations out of enthusiasm, but they remain exposed for a long time only from reflection. In what is called instinctive courage itself, there is more calculation than we think; and although, in general, passions alone bring about the first efforts, efforts continue with the result in mind. You risk a portion of what is dear in order to save the rest.[w]

u. On the back of the page: "≠Difficulty of establishing conscription as in France. Even *impressment* does not exist, though of English origin. Impossibility, however, of navy without impressment. See opinion Gallatin, non-alphabetic notebook 1, p. 25.≠" See YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 62.

v. In a first version: "It is not that the first impulse of democracy is often to assist the evil. Nothing is more impetuous than the movements of democracy, but enthusiasm, like all the other passions, soon burns itself out. In men [who (ed.)] expose themselves to dangers for a long time and submit to great sacrifices to attain an end, there is a great mixture of passion and calculation."

w. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> The entire paragraph preceding these words is very well put, and yet I have an observation to make that does not seem unimportant. Free countries make more efforts when in danger, because love of country predominates there more than in monarchies; this point granted, it seems that the devotion to public things should be greater in democracies than in aristocracies, for the author has proved well in the preceding chapters that democratic government is the one in which the people

Now, this clear perception of the future, based on learning and experience, must often be missing in democracy. The people feel much more than they reason; and if the present difficulties are great, the fear is that they will forget the greater difficulties that perhaps await them in case of defeat.

Still another cause must make the efforts of a democratic government less long-lasting than the efforts of an aristocracy.

The people not only see less clearly than the upper classes what can be hoped or feared in the future, but the people also suffer the troubles of the present quite differently from the upper classes. The nobleman, by exposing his person, runs as many chances for glory as perils. By giving the State the greater part of his income, he temporarily deprives himself of some of the pleasures of his wealth. But, for the poor man, death has no prestige, and the tax that bothers the rich man often attacks the poor man's sources of life.

This relative weakness of democratic republics in time of crisis is perhaps the greatest obstacle opposing the establishment of such a republic in Europe. For the democratic republic to survive without difficulty among a European people, it would have to be established at the same time among all the other European peoples.

I believe that the government of democracy must, in the long run, increase the real forces of society; but it cannot assemble all at once, at one place, and at a given moment, as many forces as an aristocratic government or an absolute monarchy. If a democratic country remained under republican government for a century, you can believe that at the end of the century it would be richer, more populated and more prosperous than neighboring despotic States; but during this century, it would have run the risk several times of being conquered by them.

are attached to the State by the most bonds; I know that there is nothing to bring up against the fact. But here the fact appears to me in contradiction with the theory, and the author, with Montesquieu. Perhaps it would be necessary for him to develop his idea a bit more. The following paragraph begins, moreover, to explain it well (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 110).

Of the Power That American Democracy Generally Exercises over Itself

That the American people only go along with something in the long run, and sometimes refuse to do what is useful for their well-being.—Ability that the Americans have to make mistakes that can be corrected.

This difficulty that democracy has in vanquishing passions and silencing the needs of the moment with the future in mind is noticeable in the United States in the smallest things.

The people, surrounded by flatterers [and sycophants], succeed with difficulty in triumphing over themselves. Every time you want them to impose a privation or discomfort on themselves, even for an end their reason approves, they almost always begin by refusing. The obedience that Americans give to laws is rightly praised. It must be added that in America legislation is made by the people and for the people. So in the United States, the laws appear favorable to those who, everywhere else, have the greatest interest in violating it. Thus, it may be believed that a bothersome law, which the majority felt had no present utility, would not be put into effect or would not be obeyed.

In the United States, no legislation exists relating to fraudulent bankruptcies. Would it be because there are no bankruptcies? No, on the contrary, it is because there are many of them. The fear of being prosecuted as a bankrupt surpasses, in the mind of the majority, the fear of being ruined by bankruptcies; and in the public conscience there is a sort of culpable tolerance for the crime that each person condemns individually.

In the new states of the Southwest, the citizens almost always take justice into their own hands, and murders[x] happen constantly. That stems from the habits of the people being too rough and enlightenment being spread

x. In the manuscript: "are more frequent than fistfights among us." The expression had been unanimously rejected by the readers: YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 107 (Édouard de Tocqueville?), p. 105 (Gustave de Beaumont), and CIIIb, 2, p. 1 (Hervé de Tocqueville).

too little in these wilderness areas for anyone to feel the utility of giving the law some force. There they still prefer duels[y] to trials.

Someone[z] said to me one day, in Philadelphia, that nearly all crimes in America were caused by the abuse of strong liquors that the lower classes could use at will, because it was sold to them at a very low price. "Why," I asked, "don't you put a duty on brandy?" "Our legislators have often considered it," he replied, "but it is a difficult undertaking. They fear a revolt; and besides, the members who voted for such a law would very surely not be reelected." "So," I responded, "among you, drinkers are the majority, and temperance is unpopular."

When you point out these things to statesmen, they simply respond: Let time pass; feeling the evil will enlighten the people and will show them what they need. This is often true. If democracy has more chances to make a mistake than a king or a body of nobles, it also has more chances to return to the truth, once enlightenment comes; within a democracy there are generally no interests that are contrary to the interest of the greatest number and that fight reason. But democracy can only gain the truth by experience, and many peoples cannot wait for the results of their errors without perishing.

So the great privilege of the Americans is not only to be more enlightened than others, but also to have the ability to make mistakes that can be corrected.

Add that, in order to profit easily from the experience of the past, democracy must already have reached a certain degree of civilization and enlightenment.

We see some peoples whose first education has been so perverted, and whose character presents such a strange mixture of passions, of ignorance and erroneous notions about everything, that they cannot by themselves discern the cause of their miseries; they succumb to evils that they do not know.

y. Édouard de Tocqueville (?): "The word *duel* does not apply well to a half-civilized people. Couldn't you say: the majority still prefers *fights* to trials?" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 107–8).

z. Mr. Washington Smith (in pocket notebook 3, 25 October 1831, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 184). See George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* p. 459.

I have traveled across vast countries formerly inhabited by powerful Indian nations that today no longer exist; I have lived among already mutilated tribes that, everyday, see their number decline and the splendor of their savage glory disappear; I have heard these Indians themselves foretell the final destiny reserved to their race. There is no European, however, who does not see what would have to be done to preserve these unfortunate peoples from inevitable destruction. But they do not see it; they feel the misfortunes that, each year, accumulate on their heads, and they will perish to the last man while rejecting the remedy. Force would have to be used to compel them to live.

We are astonished to see the new nations of South America stir, for a quarter century, amid constantly recurring revolutions; and each day we expect to see them recover what is called their *natural state.* But who can assert that today revolutions are not the most natural state of the Spanish of South America? In this country, society struggles at the bottom of an abyss from which it cannot escape by its own efforts.

The people who inhabit this beautiful half of a hemisphere seem obstinately bound to eviscerate themselves; nothing can divert them. Exhaustion makes them come to rest for an instant, and rest soon brings them back to new furies. When I consider them in this alternating state of miseries and crimes, I am tempted to believe that for them despotism would be a benefit.

But these two words will never be found united in my thought.

Of the Manner in Which American Democracy Conducts the Foreign Affairs of the State

Direction given to the foreign policy of the United States by Washington and Jefferson.—Nearly all the natural defects of democracy make themselves felt in the conduct of foreign affairs, and its qualities are felt little there.

We have seen that the federal Constitution places the permanent leadership of the foreign interests of the nation in the hands of the President and of

the Senate,[16] which to a certain extent puts the general policy of the Union outside of the direct and daily influence of the people. So we cannot say in an absolute manner that, in America, it is democracy that conducts the foreign affairs of the State.

There are two men who gave the policy of the Americans a direction that is still followed today; the first is Washington, and Jefferson is the second.

Washington said, in this admirable letter addressed to his fellow citizens that forms the political testament of this great man:

> The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.
>
> Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.
>
> Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one People, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by justice shall Counsel.
>
> Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with

16. *"[The President]," says the Constitution, art. 2, sect. II, paragraph 2, "shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties." The reader must not lose sight of the fact that the term of Senators lasts six years, and that, chosen by the legislators of each state, they are the result of indirect election.*

> that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European Ambition, Rivalship, Interest, Humour or Caprice?
>
> 'Tis our true policy to steer clear of permanent Alliances with any portion of the foreign world. So far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements (I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy). I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them. Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Previously Washington had expressed this excellent and sound idea: "The Nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection."

The political action of Washington always aimed to follow his maxims. He succeeded in keeping his country at peace, when all the rest of the universe was at war, and he established as a point of doctrine that the well understood interest of Americans was never to take part in the internal quarrels of Europe.

Jefferson went still farther, and he introduced to the policy of the Union this other maxim: "That the Americans should never ask for privileges from foreign nations, so that they are never obligated themselves to grant such privileges."[*]

These two principles, which due to their obvious soundness were easily grasped by the crowd, have extremely simplified the foreign policy of the United States.

Not mixing into Europe's affairs, the Union has, so to speak, no foreign interests to discuss, for it does not yet have powerful neighbors in America [{it had to be grossly and groundlessly provoked in 1812 for it to consider taking up arms}]. Placed by its situation as much as by its will outside the

[*]. Washington had already indicated this maxim, but Jefferson put it into practice and introduced it into the ideas and mores of his country.

passions of the Old World, the Union does not have to protect itself from them anymore than to espouse them. As for the passions of the New World, they are still hidden in the future.

[The Union grows constantly larger; it appears different each year, for its prosperity has something revolutionary about it. So the clear interest of the Union, which changes daily, is not to create lasting ties. Ties useful today could soon hamper its course and compromise its future.]

The Union is free from previous commitments; so it profits from the experience of the old peoples of Europe, without being obliged, like them, to make use of the past and to adapt the past to the present;[a] it is not forced, as they are, to accept an immense heritage handed down by its fathers, a mixture of glory and misery, of national friendships and hatreds. The foreign policy of the United States is eminently one of wait-and-see; it consists much more of refraining from action than of doing.

So it is very difficult to know, for now, what skill American democracy will develop in the conduct of the foreign affairs of the State.[b] On this point, its adversaries as well as it friends must suspend their judgment.

As for me, I will have no difficulty in saying: it is in the leadership of the foreign interests of society that democratic governments seem to me decidedly inferior to others.[*] In democracy, experience, mores, and edu-

a. In the margin: "≠America appears amid the civilized world with the strength of {youth and the experience of mature age.}≠" Cf. conversation with Mr. Latrobe, 3 November 1831 (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIc, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 120).

b. To the side: "≠So we must wait until matters become complicated and difficulties appear in order to be able to judge the degree to which American democracy will be capable of conducting the public affairs of society.≠"

Tocqueville's short experience at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from June to October 1849, confirmed his fears about the inferiority of democracies in foreign affairs (see his *Souvenirs, OC,* XII, p. 246). On this question, see Stephen A. Garrett, "Foreign Policy and the Democracies: De Tocqueville Revisited," *Virginia Quarterly Review* 48, no. 4 (1972): 481–500.

[*]. ≠Note, moreover, that the federal Constitution places the permanent leadership of the foreign interests of the nation in the hands of the President and the Senate, which to a certain extent places the general policy of the Union outside the daily influence of the democracy.≠

cation almost always end by creating the sort of everyday practical wisdom and the skill in the small events of life that is called good sense. Good sense suffices for the ordinary routine of society; and among a people whose education is already accomplished, democratic liberty applied to the internal affairs of the State produces greater good than the evil that can be caused by the errors of democratic government. But it is not always so in the relations of one people with another.

Foreign policy requires the use of almost none of the qualities that belong to democracy and, on the contrary, demands the development of nearly all those qualities that it lacks. Democracy favors the growth of the internal resources of the State; it spreads comfort, develops public spirit; strengthens respect for law in the different classes of society; all things that have only an indirect influence on the position of a people vis-à-vis another. But only with difficulty can democracy coordinate the details of a great undertaking, settle on one plan and then follow it stubbornly across all obstacles. It is little capable of devising measures in secret and patiently awaiting their result. These are the qualities that belong most particularly to a man or to an aristocracy. Now, in the long run it is precisely these qualities that make a people, like an individual, predominate in the end.

If, on the contrary, you pay attention to the natural defects of aristocracy,[c] you will find that the effect that these defects can produce can be felt hardly at all in the leadership of the foreign affairs of the State. The capital vice for which the aristocracy is reproached is to work only for itself alone

c. Hervé de Tocqueville:

It is absolutely necessary to add the words *in internal administration* in order to establish clearly the division between internal and external, so that the author cannot be accused of praising here the institution that he blamed above. In fact, history proves that the aristocracy, very strong externally, because it is led solely by the interest of the State, commits many mistakes internally, because its personal interest misleads it. The aristocracy of Rome had been absolute in regard to the plebeians. That of France committed enormous mistakes, and that of England for fifty years has not been much wiser (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 3).

and not for the mass. In foreign policy, it is very rare for the aristocracy to have an interest distinct from that of the people.

The inclination that leads democracy in policy matters to obey sentiments rather than reasoning, and to abandon a long developed plan for the satisfaction of a momentary passion, clearly revealed itself in America when the French Revolution broke out. The simplest insights of reason would suffice then, as today, to make the Americans understand that it was not in their interest to get engaged in the struggle that was going to cover Europe in blood, and from which the United States could suffer no harm.

The sympathies of the people in favor of France came out with such violence, however, that nothing less was required to prevent a declaration of war against England than the unyielding character of Washington and the immense popularity that he enjoyed.[d] And yet, the efforts made by the austere reason of this great man to combat the generous but unthinking passions of his fellow citizens very nearly deprived him of the only recompense that he had ever expected, the love of his country. The majority pronounced against his policy; now, the whole people approve it.[17]

If the Constitution and public favor had not given Washington the leadership of the foreign affairs of the State, the nation would certainly have done then precisely what it condemns today.[e]

d. In the margin: "{see the *History* of Pitkin.}"

17. *See the fifth volume of the* Life of Washington *by Marshall. "In a government established as that of the United States," he says, page 314, "the chief executive, whatever his firmness, cannot long present a barrier to the torrent of popular opinion; and the popular opinion that then prevailed seemed to lead to war. In fact, in the session of Congress held at this time, it was seen very frequently that Washington had lost the majority in the House of Representatives. Outside, the violence of the language used against him was extreme; in a political meeting, some were not afraid to compare him indirectly with the traitor Arnold (p. 265). Those who belonged to the opposing party," says Marshall again (p. 353), "claimed that the partisans of the administration were an aristocratic faction that was submissive to England and, wanting to establish a monarchy, was therefore the enemy of France; a faction whose members constituted a kind of nobility, that had shares of the Bank as titles, and that was so afraid of any measure that could influence its capital, that it was insensitive to the insults that both the honor and the interest of the nation demanded to be rejected."*

e. Cf. note h for p. 190.

Nearly all the peoples who have acted strongly on the world, those who have conceived, followed and executed great designs, from the Romans to the English, were led by an aristocracy; and how can you be surprised [≠when you see the part that must be attributed to the continuous effect of the same will in human events≠]?

In this world, what is most steady in its views is an aristocracy. The mass of people can be seduced by its ignorance or its passions. You can catch the mind of a king unawares and make him vacillate in his plans; and, besides, a king is not immortal. But an aristocratic body is too numerous to be won over, too few in number to yield easily to the intoxication of unthinking passions. An aristocratic body is a firm and enlightened man who does not die.[f]

f. The Pennsylvania Historical Society retains a commentary by Tocqueville on the question of French indemnities in the United States and American foreign policy. (This document had been catalogued by mistake as belonging to *Democracy in America.*) The reference to the correspondence of Livingston and the possibility that the latter had not yet left France when Tocqueville wrote his commentary led to the thought that these pages date from April or the beginning of May 1835, that is, a few months after the publication of the first part of the book. Nor is there any indication in the Yale Collection that allows a relationship to be established between these pages and the manuscript of the work. Perhaps documents in the hands of the Commission charged with the edition of Tocqueville's works would be able to offer some decisive information as to the origin of this commentary. This text, to an unknown recipient, is part of the collection of manuscripts of Ferdinand Dreer, even though the catalogue of the collection, edited by Dreer himself (*A Catalogue of the Collection of Autographs formed by Ferdinand Julius Dreer,* Philadelphia: printed for private distribution, 1890, 2 vols.), mentions no document of Tocqueville. This unedited manuscript had been utilized by William E. Lingelbach, in his commentary "American Democracy and European Interpreters," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 61, no. 1 (January 1937): 1–25 (in pages 8 and 9).

Here is the text:

> First here is what the *Constitution* says. Then I will examine the commentaries and the *practice.*
>
> The second section of Article II of the constitution reads: *"[The President] shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors."*
>
> In section three of the same Article, you read: "[*The President] shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers."]*
>
> Commentaries.

I consulted the three most respected commentaries. They are the *Federalist,* work published by three of the principal draftsmen of the federal Constitution, the commentaries of Chancellor Kent, and those of Justice Story.

[In the margin: *Federalist,* No. 43–64, vol. 2.

Story's *Commentaries,* pp. 556 and 576.]

Here are the doctrines that result. I will put my authorities in the margin.

The Senate of the United States is an assembly vested with a double character; it is at the same time a legislative body and an administrative body. In the first case, its deliberations are public; they are secret in the other case. The Senate in its quality of administrative body is charged jointly with the President with making treaties. As such it would clearly have the right to take part in negotiations,[1] but it has been wisely admitted in practice that the Senate had to leave to the President, *sole intermediary of the nation with foreign ministers,* the right to start, direct, and provisionally conclude treaties. They are afterward submitted to the Senate, which approves, rejects or modifies them, depending on its views.

It was a great question in the United States to know if a treaty concluded in this way still had to be submitted to Congress or if it bound the nation *ipso facto.*

The House of Representatives declared in 1796[2] that when the enforcement of certain clauses required the passage of a law, Congress had the right, in regard to this law, to deliberate on the treaty itself. Washington in a message that same year refused to recognize such a power in Congress.

This opinion of Washington, says Kent, *seems to have become the prevailing one in America. The House of Representatives in 1816 had the occasion to show that it shared it.* To a certain degree, this opinion explains the language of General Jackson; it served him as pretext and support for saying [that (ed.)] France would fail to meet its *agreements* if the Chamber of Deputies rejected the treaty.

It is clear to me from the texts, and from the commentaries that I have just cited, as well as from what I learned myself in America, that the Constitution and practice made the President of the United States the usual and sole representative of the nation vis-à-vis foreigners. Ministers address themselves to him alone; all words and all pieces pass through him to reach the Senate.

Now, if President Jackson by his message, which is after all only the speech of an official, did not involve the American nation in a quarrel with the French nation, at least it is certain that, as an individual, he gravely offended France. Can France, respecting its honor, continue to accept this man as the *sole and necessary intermediary* between itself and the American nation, at least until this man has given some honorable explanations? I do not think so, neither as an individual, nor as a Frenchman.

Far from President Jackson appearing disposed during three months to retract his outrageous insinuations, his conduct has continued to be more and more arrogant. His letter to Mr. Livingston indicated that with pleasure he would have seen the

Ambassador of the United States immediately leave France at the moment when passports had been offered to him.

In summary, I think that the Chamber, by adopting the principle of the law, by agreeing to separate (which is not already to act like Louis XV) the American nation from its President, the Chamber, I say, can do nothing less than declare that it only acted in this way because it was persuaded that the ministers will not accredit any diplomatic agent close to the President of the United States except in the case that the latter would give a satisfactory explanation for his words.

By acting in this way, only a temporary embarrassment in relations can result, since the term of the President expires in two years.

1. Mr. Story says, p. 558: "The Senate has very rarely, if ever, been consulted before the clauses of the treaty were settled; the treaty was then submitted to the Senate for ratification."

2. See *Kent's Commentaries,* vol. I, p. 267.

With the kind permission of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

The edition of the *Federalist* cited here by Tocqueville is probably the French translation, in two volumes, published by Buisson, which appeared in Paris in 1792. See note n for p. 193.

CHAPTER 6[a]

What Are the Real Advantages That American Society Gains from the Government of Democracy?

[Before beginning this chapter I feel the need to explain myself. I do not want my thought enclosed within limits that I have not set.

When I speak generally about the advantages of {that a country can gain from} the government of democracy, I am not talking only about the government that democracy has provided for itself in America, but about all types of government that emanate from democracy.

Every time that the government of a people is the sincere and permanent

a. Édouard de Tocqueville:

I criticize this whole chapter for being very favorable to the government of democracy at the expense of other governments. It seems to me that America is too young, that its society is too new and, you could even say, still too incomplete to draw arguments so positively advantageous to the government that it is attempting; it cannot be denied that the basis of your thought in this chapter seems to be sympathetic to American institutions; now, it would be unfortunate if someone were to believe that you came back from America American, following the usual inclination of men, and of Frenchmen above all, who greatly admire what they go to seek far away, while deprecating what is found at home. So I believe it would perhaps be good to show democratic government a little less favorably and make a bit more use of the dubitative form, perhaps to be a bit more severe as well about the bad things and the vicious aspects of this government, which would make your impartiality emerge more fully; finally, remove all the expressions that seem like those of a young man and that do not constitute true warmth of style (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 101–2).

expression of the will of the greatest number, that government, whatever the forms, is democratic.[b]

So democracy can rule over a unified nation as over a confederation, in a monarchy as in a republic.

I admit that of all governments the one that seems to me most natural to democracy is republican government. When the social state of a people turns toward democracy, the republic becomes for them a probable consequence of this social state; but I do not believe that it is a necessary consequence.

If the majority of all the citizens do violence to the instincts of equality that are natural to them and, favoring order and governmental stability, consent to vest the attributes of executive power in a family or a man who, while still leading, depends on them, there is nothing in that that shocks reason. So the rule of all and the government [v: the administration] of one man can be seen at the same time. I confess that this much reduces royal majesty, but the time is coming when, if kings do not want to take the places left [v: still offered] to them, they will no longer find any to take.][c]

Before beginning the present chapter, I feel the need to remind the reader of what I have already pointed out several times in the course of this book.

The political constitution of the United States seems to me one of the forms that democracy can give to its government; but I do not consider American institutions as either the only or the best that a democratic people should adopt.

So by making known what good things the Americans gain from the government of democracy, I am far from claiming or thinking that such advantages can only be obtained with the help of the same laws.

b. To the side: "To retouch all of this small chapter. *According to L[ouis (ed.)],* my purpose is not seen clearly enough. One doesn't know if this isn't a carefully phrased remark in favor of despotism or of L[ouis (ed.)]. P[hilippe (ed.)]."

c. This fragment also appears in YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 38–39, accompanied (p. 38) by the following comment in the margin: "All of this preamble seems to me of questionable utility, because the thought that led to writing it does not emerge clearly. As I am going to say things favorable to democracy, I am afraid that someone might suppose that I wanted to praise the *American republic,* and given this fear, I wanted to extend what I said about America to democracy in general. But I do not know if my intention is grasped."

Of the General Tendency of Laws under the Dominion of American Democracy, and Of the Instinct of Those Who Apply Them

The vices of democracy are immediately apparent.—Its advantages are seen only in the long run.—American democracy is often clumsy, but the general tendency of its laws is beneficial.—Public officials, under American democracy, have no permanent interests that differ from those of the greatest number.—What results from that.

The vices and weaknesses of the government of democracy are easily seen; they are demonstrated by obvious facts, while its salutary influence is exerted in an imperceptible and, so to speak, hidden way. Its drawbacks are striking at first sight, but its qualities are revealed only in the long run.

The laws of American democracy are often defective or incomplete; it happens that they violate vested rights or sanction dangerous ones. Were they good, their frequency would still be a great evil. All of this is seen at first glance.

So why do the American republics live on and prosper?

In laws, the end that they seek must be carefully distinguished from the way in which they move toward that end; their absolute goodness, from goodness that is only relative.[d]

d. In legislation, three things must be carefully discerned: 1. its *general tendency,* 2. its *perfection* (once its direction is given), and 3. the *manner* in which it is executed. A perfect law would be the one that would have the most useful tendency, that would move toward this end by the most skillful and most effective provisions, and that would be executed by the best agents. But this perfection is hardly ever found.

The laws of democracy are decidedly defective in the last two objects. But I am tempted to believe that they are superior in the first, and in this way I explain their general result, which often seems in general contradiction to reason and daily experience. See the example of England (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 77–78).

I suppose that the purpose of the legislator is to favor the interests of the few at the expense of those of the many; his measures are devised in a way to obtain the result that he wants in the least time and with the least possible effort. The law will be well made; its aim, bad. It will be dangerous in proportion to its very effectiveness.

The laws of democracy tend, in general, toward the good of the greatest number, for they emanate from the majority of all citizens; the majority can be mistaken, but cannot have an interest against itself.

Those of aristocracy tend, on the contrary, to monopolize wealth and power in the hands of the few, because the aristocracy by its nature always forms a minority.

So we can say, in a general way, that the purpose of democracy, in its legislation, is more useful to humanity than the purpose of aristocracy in its legislation.

But its advantages end there.

Aristocracy is infinitely more skillful in the science of lawmaking than democracy can be. Having self-control, aristocracy is not subject to passing impulses; it has long-term plans that it knows how to develop until the favorable opportunity presents itself. Aristocracy proceeds skillfully; it knows the art of bringing together at the same time, toward the same point, the collective force of all its laws.

Not so with democracy; its laws are nearly always defective or ill-timed.

[In the eyes of the world, laws badly made or made at the wrong time discredit the legislative spirit of democracy.][e]

e.

DEMOCRACY.

Imperfect laws. Succession of laws, a great evil.

Incapable or vice-ridden officials, but not having an interest contrary to the greatest number.

Laws badly made or made [v: interpreted] wrong on purpose, that is what discredits the legislative spirit of democracy.

ARISTOCRACY.

Tendency of laws contrary to the interests of the greatest number.

Capable and honest officials, but having an interest contrary to the greatest number and acting either with their consent or without their knowledge.

Less wisdom in each effort, but a greater result produced by the sum of efforts.

So the means of democracy are more imperfect than those of aristocracy. Democracy, without wanting to, often works against itself; but its end is more useful.

Imagine a society that nature, or its constitution, had organized in a way to bear the transient effect of bad laws, a society that, without perishing, can await the result of the *general tendency of the laws;*[f] and you will understand that, of all governments, the government of democracy, despite its flaws, is still the most appropriate to make this society prosper.

This is precisely what happens in the United States; here I repeat what I have already expressed elsewhere: the great privilege of the Americans is to be able to make mistakes that can be corrected.

I will say something analogous about public officials.

It is easy to see that American democracy is often wrong in its choice of the men to whom it confides power; but it is not as easy to say why the State prospers in their hands.

Note first that, in a democratic State, if those who govern are less honest or less capable, the governed are more enlightened and more attentive.

In democracies, the people, constantly occupied as they are with their affairs and jealous of their rights, prevent their representatives from departing from a certain general line drawn by the interest of the people.

If democracy could direct the spirit of legislation and aristocracy could make the laws.

This tie that binds men with or without their knowledge to the consequences of the principle that they accepted is one of the greatest miseries and greatest humiliations of our nature (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 75).

f. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> If a society made only bad laws, the effect of these laws would be to bring about bad tendencies, and everything would go to the devil.
>
> This subject is extremely abstract, and needs to be reviewed and considered again. I believe that the difficulty comes from the fact that Alexis seems to assume that most of the American laws are bad; I imagine that it is the opposite. Without that, the system that the author puts forth would not be tenable (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 93).

Note too that if the democratic magistrate exercises power worse than another, he generally holds it for less time.[g]

But there is a more general and more satisfying reason than the latter.

It is undoubtedly important for the good of nations that those who govern have virtues and talents; but perhaps it is even more important to them that those who govern have no interests contrary to the mass of the governed; for, in this case, virtues could become nearly useless, and talents, destructive.

I said it was important that those who govern have no interests contrary to or different from the mass of the governed; I did not say it was important that they had interests similar to those of *all* the governed, for I am not aware that such a thing has yet been seen.

The political form has not yet been found that equally favors the development and the prosperity of all the classes that make up society. These classes have continued to form like so many distinct nations in the same nation, and experience has proved that it was nearly as dangerous to put the fate of the others completely in the hands of any one of them as to make one people the arbiter of the destiny of another people. When the rich alone govern, the interest of the poor is always in danger; and when the poor make the laws, the interest of the rich runs great risks. So what is the advantage of democracy? The real advantage of democracy is not, as some have said, to favor the prosperity of all, but only to serve the well-being of the greatest number.

Those charged, in the United States, with leading public affairs are often

g. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> In my view, that is the true, often noted reason why, in the republics of antiquity, the more clearly it was noticed that officials abused their power, the more the term of office was shortened. Thus, in Athens the archons for life were reduced to ten years, and then to one year. In Rome, the power of the consuls, which lasted only one year, was much less dangerous than that of the tribunes, which lasted five years; the dictatorship, despite its omnipotence, only became dangerous to liberty when it dared to go beyond the limit of six months that had been set by law (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 94).

Here, as elsewhere, Hervé uses arguments taken from Montesquieu (cf. chapter III of book II of *L'esprit des lois*).

inferior in capacity and morality to the men whom aristocracy would bring to power; but their interest merges and is identified with that of the majority[h] of their fellow citizens. So they can commit frequent infidelities and serious errors, but they will never systematically follow a tendency hostile to this majority; and they can never impart an exclusive and dangerous direction to the government.

The bad administration of a magistrate, under democracy, is moreover an isolated fact that has influence only during the short term of the administration. Corruption and incompetence are not common interests that can bind men together in a permanent way.

A corrupt or incompetent magistrate will not combine his efforts with another magistrate for the sole reason that the latter is, like him, incompetent and corrupt; and these two men will never work in unison to make corruption and incompetency flower among their descendants. On the contrary, the ambition and the maneuvering of the one will serve to unmask the other. In democracies, the vices of the magistrate are, in general, entirely personal.

But public men, under the government of aristocracy, have a class interest that, if it sometimes merges with the interest of the majority, often remains distinct from it. This interest forms a common and lasting bond among these public men; it invites them to unite and to combine their efforts toward an end that is not always the happiness of the greatest number. It not only links those who govern with each other; it also links them with a considerable portion of the governed, for many citizens, without holding any office, are part of the aristocracy.

So the aristocratic magistrate finds a constant support in society, at the same time that he finds one in government.

This common objective that, in aristocracies, unites magistrates with the interest of a part of their contemporaries, also identifies them with and, so to speak, subjects them to future races. They work for the future as well as for the present. So the aristocratic magistrate is pushed simultaneously toward the same point, by the passions of the governed, by his own, and I could almost say by the passions of his posterity.

h. In the manuscript: "of the greatest number."

How can we be surprised if he doesn't resist? Consequently, in aristocracies we often see even those not corrupted by class spirit dragged along by it and unknowingly made to adapt society little by little to their own use and to prepare it for their descendants.

I do not know if an aristocracy has ever existed as liberal as that of England, and that has, without interruption, provided the government of the country with men as worthy and as enlightened.

It is easy to recognize, however, that in English legislation the good of the poor has often ended by being sacrificed to that of the rich,[j] and the

j. This sentence provoked the immediate reaction of two English readers. In a letter of 17 February 1835, Nassau Senior remarked:

> I do not think that in England the wealth of the poor has been sacrificed to that of the rich. As far as my investigations extend, the wages of the English labourer are higher than those of any labourer. He has no landed property, because it is more profitable to him to work for another than to cultivate; but this depends on the same ground which makes it more profitable to work for a cotton manufacturer than to make stockings for his own use. It is a part of the division of labour, of which la grande culture is only an instance (*Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville and Nassau William Senior,* London: Henry S. King & Co., 1872, I, pp. 4–5).

Tocqueville replied:

> It seems to me that you give to the expression *le bien du pauvre* a confined sense that was not mine: you translate it *wealth,* a word especially applied to money. I meant by it all that contributes to happiness: personal consideration, political right, easy justice, intellectual enjoyments, and many other indirect sources of contentment. I shall believe, till I have proof of the contrary, that in England the rich have gradually monopolized almost all the advantages that society bestows upon mankind. Taking the question in your own restricted sense, and admitting that a poor man is better paid when he works on another man's land than when he cultivates his own, do you not think that there are political, moral, and intellectual advantages, which are a more than sufficient and, above all, a permanent compensation for the loss that you point out? (letter of 21 February 1835, *ibid.,* p. 7).

He replied in slightly different terms to Basil Hall, officer in the English navy and author of the controversial work on the United States *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828:*

> You reproach me for having said *that the interests of the poor were sacrificed in England to those of the rich.* I confess that this thought, exposed in so few words, thrown out in passing, without commentary, naturally tends to present a meaning much more absolute than what I intended to give it, and my intention has always been to modify

rights of the greatest number to the privileges of a few. Therefore, within England today all the greatest extremes of fortune are present together, and miseries are found there that nearly equal its power and glory.[k]

In the United States, where public officials have no class interest to insist upon, the general and continuous course of government is beneficial, even though those who govern are often lacking in skill and sometimes contemptible.

So there is, at the heart of democratic institutions, a hidden tendency that often makes men work toward the general prosperity, despite their vices or errors, while in aristocratic institutions a secret inclination is sometimes uncovered that, despite talents and virtues, carries them toward contributing to the miseries of their fellows. In this way, in aristocratic governments, public men can do evil without wanting to do so, and in democracies, they can produce good without thinking to do so.[m]

it when I would be able to revise my work. What I principally wanted to say is that England is a country where wealth is the *necessary preliminary* to a multitude of things that elsewhere can be obtained without it. So that in England there is a multitude of careers that are much more closed to the poor than they are in several other countries. This would still require a great number of explanations to be well understood. I am obliged to postpone them until the moment when I will have the pleasure of seeing you again. Château de Baugy, 19 June 1836. With the kind permission of the library of Princeton University (General Manuscripts [MISC] Collection, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections). See note d for pp. 819–21 of volume III.

k. In the manuscript: "Thus England today has reached a level of misery that nearly equals its power . . ."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "The word *England* presents too absolute an idea that reason immediately contests. I believe that it would be necessary to put: *the lower class in England has reached,* etc." (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 95).

m. The world is a book entirely closed to man.

So there is at the heart of democratic institutions a hidden tendency that carries men toward the good [v: to work toward general prosperity] despite their vices and errors; while in aristocratic institutions a secret inclination is sometimes uncovered that, despite talents and virtues, leads them to contribute to the miseries of the greatest number of their fellows.

If a hidden force independent of men did not exist in democratic institutions, it would be impossible to explain satisfactorily the peace and prosperity that reign within certain democracies (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 76).

[If it were not so, who could understand what happens among men?

We would see some peoples enjoy a greater mass of well-being and prosperity than other peoples and, when we came to examine the detail of their government, we would find something to correct in each of its actions.

Other peoples would have something more than the usual state of human miseries as their share, and their public affairs would seem wisely conducted.

So is prosperity in the world the reward of error and folly; are miseries the recompense for skill and wisdom?/

This involuntary obedience of man to his own laws seems to me one of the great miseries of our nature.

Who could say within what narrow limits what we call our free will is exercised? Man obeys first causes of which he is unaware, secondary causes that he cannot foresee, a thousand caprices of his fellows; in the end, he puts himself in chains and binds himself forever to the fragile work of his hands.][n]

Of Public Spirit in the United States[o]

Instinctive love of country.—Thoughtful patriotism.—Their different characters.—That peoples must tend with all their might toward the second when the first disappears.—Efforts that the Americans have made to succeed in doing so.—The interest of the individual intimately bound to that of the country.

There exists a love of country that has its source principally in the unthinking, disinterested and indefinable sentiment that binds the heart of the man to the places where the man was born. This instinctive love is mingled with

n. In the first chapter of the *Social Contract,* Rousseau asserts that if man is born free, he finds himself everywhere in chains. The image is customary at that time.

o. To the side: "{Mr. Parier [?(ed.)] will leave blank what I} enclosed in lines." (It probably involves the copyist of the manuscript. Here and there fragments in his hand are found in the manuscript.)

the taste for ancient customs, with respect for ancestors, and the memory of the past; those who experience it cherish their country as one loves the paternal home. They love the tranquillity that they enjoy there; they are fond of the peaceful habits that they contracted there; they are attached to the memories that it offers, and even find some sweet pleasure in living there in obedience. Often this love of country is intensified even more by religious zeal, and then you see it accomplish miracles. It is itself a kind of religion; it does not reason, it believes; it feels; it acts. Some peoples have been found who have, in some way, personified the country and have caught sight of it in the prince. So they have transferred to him a part of the sentiments that compose patriotism; they have boasted about his triumphs and have been proud of his power. There was a time, under the old monarchy, when the French felt a sort of joy in feeling themselves given, without recourse, to the arbitrariness of the monarch, and said with pride: "We live under the most powerful king in the world."[p]

Like all unthinking passions, this love of country encourages great episodic efforts rather than continuity of efforts. After saving the State in time of crisis, it often leaves it to decline amid peace. [≠This love of country is found in the cradle of societies; it presides during the early ages of peoples.≠]

When peoples are still simple in their mores and firm in their beliefs; when society rests gently upon an old order of things, whose legitimacy is uncontested, you see this instinctive love of country reign.[q]

There is another love of country more rational than that one; less generous, less ardent perhaps, but more fruitful and more durable; this one arises from enlightenment; it develops with the help of laws; it grows with the exercise of rights; and it ends up merging, in a way, with personal interest. A man understands the influence that the well-being of the country has on his own; he knows that the law allows him to contribute to bringing

p. Hervé de Tocqueville: "All of this piece is charming; nonetheless the words *caught sight of* are not good" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 95).

q. "If God had granted me the power to change societies at will, and if I found along my way a people who had remained in this state, I would hesitate a long time, I admit, before trying to draw them out of that state" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 5).

this well-being into being, and he interests himself in the prosperity of his country, first as something useful to him and then as his work.

But sometimes, in the life of peoples, a moment occurs when ancient customs are changed, mores destroyed, beliefs shaken, the prestige of memories has vanished, yet when enlightenment has remained incomplete and political rights poorly guaranteed or limited. Then men no longer see the country except in a weak and doubtful light; they no longer locate it either in the soil, which in their eyes has become an inanimate land, or in the customs of their ancestors, which they have been taught to regard as a burden; or in religion, which they doubt; or in the laws, which they do not make, or in the legislator, whom they fear and scorn. So they see it nowhere, not under its own features any more than under any other, and they withdraw into a narrow and unenlightened egoism. These men escape prejudices without recognizing the empire of reason; they have neither the instinctive patriotism of monarchy, nor the thoughtful patriotism of the republic; but they have stopped between the two, in the middle of confusion and misery.

What is to be done in such a state? Go back. But peoples do not return to the sentiments of their youth any more than men to the innocent tastes of early years; they can regret them, but not make them come again. So it is necessary to move ahead and hasten to unite, in the eyes of the people, individual interest and the interest of the country, for disinterested love of country flies away never to return.[r]

r. I see in Europe an innumerable multitude that finds itself entirely excluded from the administration of its country. I think at first that these men, seeing themselves reduced to such a state [v: bondage] are going to become indignant, but no, they rejoice in it.

For my part, what I most reproach despotism for are not its rigors. I would pardon it for tormenting men if it did not *corrupt* them. Despotism creates in the soul of those who are subjected to it a blind passion for tranquillity, a kind of depraved taste for obedience, a sort of inconceivable self-contempt that ends up making them indifferent to their interests and enemies of their own rights.

Then they wrongly persuade themselves that by losing in this way all the privileges of civilized man, they escape all his burdens and evade all his duties. So they feel free and count in society like a lackey [v: valet] in the house of his master; and think that they have only to eat the bread that is left for them, without concerning themselves about the cares of the harvest.

I am surely far from claiming that to reach this result we must suddenly grant the exercise of political rights to all men; but I say that the most powerful means, and perhaps the only one remaining to us, to interest men in the fate of their country, is to make them participate in its government. Today, civic spirit seems to me inseparable from the exercise of political rights; and I think that from now on, we will see the number of citizens in Europe increase or decrease in proportion to the extension of these rights.

How is it that in the United States, where the inhabitants arrived yesterday on the soil that they occupy, where they brought neither customs, nor memories; where they meet for the first time without knowing each other; where, to put it in a word, the instinct for native land can hardly exist; how is it that each person is involved in the affairs of his town, of his district, and of the entire State as his very own? Because each person, in his sphere, takes an active part in the government of society.

The common man in the United States has understood the influence that general prosperity exercises over his own happiness, an idea so simple and yet so little known by the people. He has, moreover, become accustomed to regarding this prosperity as his work. So, in public fortune, he sees his own, and he works for the good of the State, not only by duty or by pride, but I would almost dare to say by cupidity.

When a man has reached this point, I will call him, if you want, a peaceful inhabitant, an honest settler, a good family man. I am ready for everything, provided that you do not force me to give him the name of citizen.

I am surely far from claiming that the exercise of political rights can be suddenly granted to all men. But I say that civic spirit is nearly inseparable from the exercise of political rights. So the number of citizens always increases or decreases in a country in proportion to the extension of these rights, and where the exercise can be granted to all, the development of civic spirit is nearly without limits (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 2–4).

A note dated 1840, when Tocqueville was a deputy and was occupied in the Chamber with the electoral issue, specified, however: "As for electoral reform, here is my sentiment. The mode of election: I absolutely refuse all lowering of the electoral qualification or equivalent additions.—I do not want a more *radical* election law, but a more *moral* one—an electoral system that makes corruption by patronage more difficult—1840." Note reproduced in Pierre Roland-Marcel, *Essai politique sur Alexis de Tocqueville,* Paris: Félix Alcan, 1910, p. 211.

[He values his rights as a citizen as his rights as a proprietor, and he takes an interest in the State as in his cottage or in the field that his labors have made fruitful.]

It is not necessary to study the institutions and the history of the Americans to know the truth of the preceding; the mores alert you to it well enough. The American, taking part in all that is happening in this country, believes it is in his interest to defend all that you criticize there; for it is not only his country that you then attack, it is himself. Consequently, you see his national pride resort to all the artifices and descend to all the puerilities of individual vanity.

[An American in his country resembles a lover of gardens on his grounds. Don't you admire this rock? Is there anything more graceful than the contour of this stream? Aren't these trees planted well and to good effect? Whatever you say, do not hope to satisfy him. The reason is simple. You admire what is good, and he admires his work.]

There is nothing more annoying in the experience of life than this irritable patriotism of the Americans. The foreigner would gladly agree to praise a great deal in their country; but he would want them to allow him to find fault with something, and that is what they absolutely refuse.

So America is a country of liberty, where, to hurt no one, the foreigner must not speak freely about individuals, nor the State, nor the governed, nor those who govern, nor public enterprises, nor private enterprises, about nothing in fact that you find there, except perhaps for climate and soil; even then you find some Americans ready to defend the one and the other as if they had taken part in their formation.[s]

Today it is necessary to know how to make up your mind and dare to

s. American patriotism is already mentioned in the first letter that Tocqueville sent to his family during his voyage to the United States: "These people seem to me to stink of national pride; it pokes through all of their politeness" (Letter to his mother, 26 April 1831, YTC, BIa2; this sentence does not appear in the edition of Tocqueville's works done by Beaumont). Beaumont, on his side, writes in his novel: "The writers, in the United States, who want to find readers are obliged to praise all that belongs to the Americans, even their rigorous climate, about which they can assuredly change nothing. In this way, Washington Irving, despite all of his intelligence, believes himself forced to admire the temperate heat of the summers and the mildness of the winters in North America" (*Marie,* I, pp. 360–61).

choose between the patriotism of all and the government of a few, for you cannot at the same time combine the social strength and activity given by the first with the guarantees of tranquillity sometimes provided by the second.

Of the Idea of Rights in the United States

There are no great peoples without the idea of rights.—What is the way to give the people the idea of rights.—Respect for rights in the United States.—What gives rise to it.

After the general idea of virtue, I do not know any more beautiful than that of rights, or rather, these two ideas merge. The idea of rights is nothing more than the idea of virtue introduced into the political world.

With the idea of rights, men have defined what license and tyranny were. Enlightened by it, each person has been able to show himself independent without arrogance and submissive without servility. The man who obeys violence yields and abases himself; but when he submits to the right of command that he acknowledges in his fellow, he rises, in a way, above even the one commanding him. There are no great men without virtue; without respect for rights, there is no great people. You can almost say that there is no society; for what is a gathering of rational and intelligent beings bound together only by force?[t]

t. In the world there are two kinds of respect for rights that must not be confused; one, unthinking, arises from custom and grows stronger in ignorance. What for a long time has been powerful and strong is respected, and the right to command is judged by the fact of command. This respect for rights only guarantees the existence of the strong, not that of the weak. Where it reigns, there is tranquillity, but there is no liberty; neither prosperity nor independence is found.

Authority based on this instinctive respect for (illegible word) [v: {for rights}] is absolute as long as no one contests its right; the day it is disputed, it is reduced almost to nothing.

There is another kind of respect for rights. The latter is reciprocal and guarantees the privileges of the subject as well as those of the prince. This respect for rights was based on reason and experience. Once it reigns in society, it is very difficult to destroy it.

I wonder what way there is today to inculcate men with the idea of rights and to make it apparent to their senses, so to speak; and I only see a single one; it is to give all of them the peaceful exercise of certain rights. You see that clearly with children, who are men, except for strength and experience. When a child begins to move among external objects, instinct leads him to put everything that comes within reach to his own use; he has no idea of the property of others, not even that of existence; but as he is informed about the cost of things and as he discovers that things can, in turn, be taken from him, he becomes more circumspect and ends by respecting in his fellows what he wants them to respect in him.

What happens to the child concerning toys, happens later to the man concerning all the objects belonging to him. Why in America, country of democracy par excellence, does no one raise against property in general the complaints that often resound in Europe? Is it necessary to say? In America there are no proletarians. Each person, having an individual possession to defend, recognizes in principle the right of property.

In the political world, it is the same. In America the common man has conceived a high idea of political rights, because he has political rights; he does not attack the rights of others, so that no one violates his. And while in Europe this same man has no regard even for the sovereign authority, the American submits without murmuring to the power of the least of his magistrates.

This truth appears even in the smallest details of the existence of peoples. In France, there are few pleasures exclusively reserved for the upper classes of society; the poor man is admitted almost everywhere the rich man is able

[In the margin: The one is a sentiment rather than an idea. The other is based on an idea rather than on a sentiment. The one is instinctive; the other is rational.]

But there are centuries when peoples, having lost the habit of respecting what they do not know, still have not learned to know what they must respect. Then peoples are tormented by a profound illness, tossing and turning without rest, like a sick man stretched out aboard ship on his unsteady sickbed; there are even some who perish during this transition [from (ed.)] custom to reason.

[In the margin: You could more easily turn a river back upon its source than make this instinctive respect for rights reappear.]

I wonder what the way is . . . (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 11–13).

to enter. Consequently you see him conduct himself with decency and respect all that is useful for the enjoyments that he shares. In England, where wealth has the privilege of pleasure, like the monopoly of power, the complaint is that when the poor man succeeds in getting furtively into the place destined for the pleasures of the rich man, he loves to cause pointless damage. Why be astonished by this? Care has been taken so that he has nothing to lose.

The government of democracy makes the idea of political rights descend to the least of citizens, as the division of property puts the idea of the right of property in general within reach of all men. That is one of its greatest merits in my view.

I am not saying that it is an easy thing to teach all men to use political rights; I am only saying that, when it is possible, the effects that result are great.

And I add that if there is a century when such an enterprise must be attempted, that century is our own.

Don't you see that religions are growing weaker and that the divine notion of rights is disappearing? Don't you find that mores are becoming corrupted and that, with them, the moral notion of rights is fading away?

Don't you see, on all sides, beliefs giving way to reasoning, and sentiments, to calculation? If, in the midst of this universal disturbance, you do not succeed in linking the idea of rights to personal interest, which offers itself as the only fixed point in the human heart, what will you have left for governing the world, if not fear?[u]

u. It is because I see the rights of governments disputed, that I think it necessary to hasten to give rights to those governed.

It is because I see democracy triumphing, that I want to regulate democracy.

[In the margin: If morality was strong enough by itself, I would not regard it as so important to rely on what is useful.

If the idea of what is just was more powerful, I would not speak so much about the idea of what is useful.]

You say to me that, since morality has become lax, new rights will be new items for the passions of today; that since governments are already weak, new rights will give new weapons to their enemies to use against them; that democracy is already too strong in society without further introducing it into government.

So when you say to me that laws are weak, and the governed, turbulent; that passions are intense, and virtue, powerless, and that in this situation you must not think about increasing the rights of democracy, I answer that, because of these very things, I believe you must think about it; and in truth, I think that governments have still more interest in it than society does, for governments perish, and society cannot die.[v] However, I do not want to abuse the example of America.

In America, the people were vested with political rights in a period when it was difficult for them to make poor use of those rights, because the citizens were few and had simple mores. While growing, the Americans have not increased the powers of democracy; rather they have extended its sphere. [That is an invaluable advantage.]

It cannot be doubted that the moment when political rights are granted to a people who have, until then, been deprived of them is a moment of crisis, a crisis often necessary, but always dangerous.

The child inflicts death when he is unaware of the value of life; he takes property from others before knowing that someone can rob him of his. The common man, at the moment when he is granted political rights, finds himself, in relation to his rights, in the same position as the child vis-à-vis all of nature. In this case the celebrated phrase [of Hobbes] applies to him: *Homo puer robustus.*[w]

I will answer that it is because I see that morality is weak that I want to put it under the safeguard of interest; it is because I see governments impotent that I would like to accustom the governed to respecting them; it is [broken text (ed.)] (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 30).

v. To the side: "≠I am not saying that political rights must be granted as of today to the universality of citizens; I am saying the unlimited extension of rights is the end toward which you must always tend.≠"

w. Tocqueville cites *De Cive* (see the critical edition of Howard Warrender, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, p. 33), but what precedes the citation is more similar to *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* (*Oeuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, III, pp. 153–54), in which Rousseau, who cites the same fragment, reproaches Hobbes for not knowing that ethical values are born with society and are not a product preceding society. Tocqueville pointed out in this same part of the chapter that a society cannot survive if its only bond is force and its only government, fear; on this point, this also makes him closer to Rousseau than to Hobbes. This proximity of ideas must not hide divergences on the concept of rights, which has scarcely any place in the theory of Rousseau.

This truth is even revealed in America. The states in which citizens have enjoyed their rights for the longest time are those in which the citizens know best how to make use of their rights.

It cannot be said too much. There is nothing more fruitful in wonders than the art of being free; but there is nothing harder than apprenticeship in liberty. It is not the same with despotism. Despotism often presents itself as the repairer of all the misfortunes suffered; it is the support of legitimate rights, the upholder of the oppressed, and the founder of order. Peoples fall asleep amid the temporary prosperity that it brings forth; and when they awaken, they are miserable. Liberty, in contrast, is usually born amid storms; it is established painfully in the midst of civil discord, and only when it is already old can its benefits be known.

Of the Respect for the Law in the United States[x]

Respect of the Americans for the law.—Paternal love that they feel for it.—Personal interest that each one finds in increasing the power of the law.

It is not always possible to call the whole people, either directly or indirectly, to the making of the law; but it cannot be denied that, when it is practicable, the law thereby acquires a great authority. This popular origin, which often harms the goodness and wisdom of the legislation, contributes singularly to its power.[y]

In the expression of the will of an entire people, there is a prodigious strength. When it comes clearly to light, even the imagination of those who would like to fight against it is as though overwhelmed.

x. Title in the manuscript: OF THE POINT OF VIEW FROM WHICH THE PEOPLE CONSIDER THE LAW IN THE UNITED STATES.

y. In the margin: "≠There are two types of moral force:
"The one because the law conforms to justice and to reason.
"The other because it conforms to the will of the greatest number./
"The law draws its moral force from two sources.
"The one is reason; the other is the consent of the greatest number.≠"

The truth of this is well known by parties.

Consequently, you see them contest the majority wherever they can. When they lack the majority of those who voted, they place it among those who have abstained from voting; and when, even there, the majority escapes them, they find it among those who do not have the right to vote.

In the United States, except for slaves, servants, and the poor provided for by the towns, there is no one who is not a voter and who, as such, does not indirectly contribute to the law. So those who want to attack the laws are reduced to doing conspicuously one of two things; they must either change the opinion of the nation, or trample its will underfoot.

Add to this first reason another more direct and more powerful, that in the United States each person finds a kind of personal interest in having everyone obey the laws; for the one who is not part of the majority today will perhaps be among its ranks tomorrow; and this respect that he now professes for the will of the legislator, he will soon have the occasion to demand for his own will. So, however annoying the law, the inhabitant of the United States submits without trouble, not only as a work of the greatest number, but also as his own; he considers it from the point of view of a contract to which he would have been a party.

So in the United States, you do not see a numerous and always turbulent crowd who, seeing the law as a natural enemy, only looks upon it with fear and suspicion. On the contrary, it is impossible not to see that all classes show a great confidence in the legislation that governs the country and feel a kind of paternal love for it.

I am wrong in saying all classes. In America, since the European scale of powers is reversed, the rich find themselves in a position analogous to that of the poor in Europe; they are the ones who often distrust the law. I have said it elsewhere: the real advantage of democratic government is not to guarantee the interests of all, as has sometimes been claimed, but only to protect those of the greatest number. In the United States, where the poor man governs, the rich have always to fear that he will abuse his power against them.

This disposition of the mind of the rich can produce a muted discontent; but society is not violently troubled by it; for the same reason that

prevents the rich man from giving his confidence to the legislator prevents him from defying his commands. He does not make the law, because he is rich; and he does not dare to violate it, because of his wealth. In general, among civilized nations, only those who have nothing to lose revolt. Therefore, if the laws of democracy are not always respectable, they are nearly always respected; for those who generally violate the laws cannot fail to obey the laws that they have made and from which they profit, and the citizens who could have an interest in breaking them are led by character and by position to submit to whatever the will of the legislator is. Moreover, the people, in America, not only obey the law because it is their work, but also because they can change it when by chance it injures them; they submit to it first as an evil that they imposed on themselves, and then as a temporary evil.

Activity That Reigns in All Parts of the Political Body in the United States; Influence That It Exercises on Society

It is more difficult to imagine the political activity that reigns in the United States than the liberty or equality that is found there.—The great movement that constantly agitates the legislatures is only an episode, a prolongation of this universal movement.—Difficulty that the American has occupying himself only with his own affairs.—Political agitation spreads into civil society.—Industrial activity of the Americans coming in part from this cause.—Indirect advantages that society gains from the government of democracy.

When you pass from a free country into another that is not, you are struck by a very extraordinary spectacle: there, everything is activity and movement; here, everything seems calm and immobile. In the one, the only question is improvement and progress; you would say that society, in the other, having gained all good things, aspires only to rest in order to enjoy them. The country that gets so worked up to be happy is, however, generally richer

and more prosperous than the one that seems so satisfied with its lot. And in considering the one and the other, you have difficulty imagining how so many new needs make themselves felt each day in the first, while so few seem to be experienced in the second.[z]

If this remark is applicable to free countries that have retained monarchical form and to those in which aristocracy dominates, it is very much more applicable to democratic republics. There, it is no longer a portion of the people that sets out to improve the state of society; the whole people take charge of this concern. It is a matter of providing for the needs and conveniences not only of a class, but of all classes at the same time.[a]

It is not impossible to imagine the immense liberty that the Americans enjoy. You can also have an idea of their extreme equality, but what you cannot understand, without having already witnessed it, is the political activity that reigns in the United States.

Scarcely have you landed on American soil than you find yourself in the middle of a sort of tumult; a confused clamor arises on all sides; a thousand voices reach your ear at the same time; each one expresses various social needs. Around you, everything stirs: here, the people of a neighborhood have gathered to know if a church should be built; there, some are working on choosing a representative; farther along, the deputies of a district go as fast as they can to the city, in order to see to certain local improvements; in another place, it is the farmers of the village who abandon their fields to go to discuss the plan of a road or of a school. Some citizens assemble for the sole purpose of declaring that [{freemasonry menaces the security of the State}] they disapprove of the government's course; while others gather

z. In the margin: "<≠What is even much more surprising is that often [v: sometimes] the people who do nothing to improve their lot, find themselves as satisfied with their destiny as the people who stir themselves to make theirs better. The second wonders that one can be so happy in the midst of so much misery; and the first, that one can go to so much trouble to become happy.≠>"

a. In the margin: "≠A European would be very unhappy if you forced him to pursue well-being with so much effort.

"It is difficult to believe that men are happy when they make so much effort to become happier.

"It is the story of the rich tradesman who dies of boredom when he is forced to abandon his business.≠"

to proclaim that the men in office are the fathers of the country. Here are still others who, seeing drunkenness as the principal source of the evils of the State, come to pledge solemnly to give an example of temperance.[1]

The great political movement that constantly agitates American legislatures, the only one that is noticed outside, is only an episode and a sort of prolongation of the universal movement that begins in the lowest ranks of the people and then reaches, one by one, all classes of citizens. You cannot work harder to be happy.

It is difficult to say what place political concerns occupy in the life of a man in the United States. To get involved in the government of society and to talk about it, that is the greatest business and, so to speak, the only pleasure that an American knows. This is seen even in the smallest habits of his life; women themselves often go to public assemblies and, by listening to political speeches, relax from household cares. For them, clubs replace theatrical entertainments to a certain point. An American does not know how to converse, but he discusses; he does not discourse, but he holds forth. He always speaks to you as to an assembly; and if he happens by chance to get excited, he will say: Gentlemen, while addressing his interlocutor.

In certain countries, the inhabitant accepts only with a kind of repugnance the political rights that the law grants him; dealing with common interests seems to rob him of his time, and he loves to enclose himself within a narrow egoism exactly limited by four ditches topped by hedges.

In contrast, from the moment when the American would be reduced to attending only to his own affairs, half of his existence would be taken away

1. *Temperance societies*[b] *are associations whose members pledge to abstain from strong liquor. At the time of my visit to the United States, temperance societies already counted more than 270,000 members, and their effect had been to diminish, in the state of Pennsylvania alone, the consumption of strong liquors by 500,000 gallons annually.*

b. See chapter V of this part (p. 365) and *Écrits sur le système pénitentiaire en France et à l'étranger* (*OC,* IV, 1), pp. 327–28, appendix VII of *Système pénitentiaire.*

from him; he would feel an immense emptiness in his days, and he would become unbelievably unhappy.[2]

I am persuaded that if despotism ever succeeds in becoming established in America, it will have even more difficulties overcoming the habits that liberty has engendered than surmounting the love of liberty itself.

This constantly recurring agitation that the government of democracy has introduced into the political world passes afterward into civil society. Everything considered, I do not know if that is not the greatest advantage of democratic government, and I praise it much more for what it causes to be done than for what it does.

Incontestably the people often direct public affairs very badly; but the people cannot get involved in public affairs without having the circle of their ideas expand, and without seeing their minds emerge from their ordinary routine. The common man who is called to the government of society conceives a certain esteem for himself. Since he is then a power, very enlightened minds put themselves in the service of his. People speak to him constantly in order to gain his support, and by seeking to deceive him in a thousand different ways, they enlighten him. In politics, he takes part in enterprises that he did not conceive, but that give him a general taste for enterprises. Every day new improvements to make to common property are pointed out to him, and he feels the desire to improve his personal property arise. Perhaps he is neither more virtuous nor more happy, but he is more enlightened and more active than his predecessors. I do not doubt that democratic institutions, joined with the physical nature of the country, are the cause, not direct, as so many people say, but indirect of the prodigious movement of industry that is noticed in the United States. It is not the laws that give birth to it, but the people learn to produce it by making the law.[d]

2. *The same fact was already observed in Rome under the first Caesars.*

Montesquieu remarks somewhere[c] *that nothing equaled the despair of certain Roman citizens who, after the agitations of a political existence, returned suddenly to the calm of private life.*

c. Probably in *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* chapter XI, in *Œuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1951, II, p. 131.

d. In the margin: "≠Superiority of the strength of the people which is worth more

When the enemies of democracy claim that one man does what he undertakes better than the government of all, it seems to me that they are right. The government of one man, supposing equality of enlightenment on both sides, brings more consistency to its enterprises than that of the multitude; it shows more perseverance, more of an idea of the whole, more perfection in details, a more correct discernment in the choice of men. [{So a republic is not administered as well as a monarchy, supposing equality of enlightenment on both sides.}] Those who deny these things have never seen a democratic republic, or have judged only on a small number of examples. Democracy, even when local circumstances and the dispositions of the people allow it to persist, does not offer the sight of administrative regularity and methodical order in government; that is true. Democratic liberty does not execute each of its enterprises with the same perfection as intelligent despotism; often it abandons them before gaining the fruit, or chances dangerous ones; but in the long run it produces more than despotism; it does not do each thing as well, but it does more things. Under its dominion, it is, above all, not what the public administration executes that is great, but what is executed without it and outside of it. Democracy does not give the people the most skillful government, but it does what the most skillful government is often impotent to create; it spreads[e] throughout the social body a restless activity, a superabundant force, an energy that never exists without it and that, if only circumstances are favorable, can bring forth wonders. Those are its true advantages.

In this century, when the destinies of the Christian world appear to be in suspense, some hasten to attack democracy like a powerful enemy, while it is still growing; others already adore it as a new god coming out of nothingness; but both know only imperfectly the object of their hate or their desire; they fight in the shadows and strike only at random.

than the government. It is difficult to make the people listen to reason, but when they hear it, they advance toward reason with a much stronger step and with a much more powerful effort. Criminal investigation in America. Smuggling.≠"

e. The manuscript adds: "in a way unknowingly."

What do you ask of society and its government? We must understand one another.

Do you want to give the human spirit a certain nobility, a generous fashion of envisioning the things of this world? Do you want to inspire in men a sort of contempt for material goods? Do you desire to bring about or to maintain profound convictions and prepare great devotions?

Is it a matter for you of polishing mores, of elevating manners, of making the arts shine? Do you want poetry, fame, and glory?

Do you claim to organize a people in a way to act strongly on all others? Do you intend it to attempt great undertakings, and, whatever the result of its efforts, to leave an immense trace in history?

If such, in your view, is the principal object that men must propose for themselves in society, do not opt for the government of democracy; it would not lead you surely to the goal.

But if it seems useful to you to divert the intellectual and moral activity of man toward the necessities of material life, and to use it to produce well-being; if reason appears to you more profitable to men than genius; if your object is not to create heroic virtues, but peaceful habits; if you like to see vices more than crimes, and prefer to find fewer great actions, on the condition of encountering fewer cases of heinous crimes; if, instead of acting within the bosom of a brilliant society, it is enough for you to live in the midst of a prosperous society; if, finally, in your view, the principal object of a government is not to give the entire body of the nation the most strength or the most glory possible, but to provide for each of the individuals that make up the society the most well-being and to avoid the most misery; then equalize conditions and constitute the government of democracy.[f]

If there is no more time to make a choice, and a force superior to men is already carrying you, without consulting your desires, toward one of

f. See appendix V of this edition, particularly pp. 1369–71.

these two governments, seek at least to derive from it all the good that it can do; and knowing its good instincts, as well as its bad inclinations, endeavor to limit the effect of the second and to develop the first.[g]

g. Note in the manuscript at the end of the chapter: "≠Perhaps, in place of these generalities, it would be better to develop this single idea that if the government of democracy is not favorable to the first part of the picture, it has the advantage of serving the well-being of the greatest number.

"Perhaps put all this at the end of the advantages of democracy like a kind of summary.≠"

CHAPTER 7

Of the Omnipotence of the Majority in the United States and Its Effects[a]

a. Hervé de Tocqueville:

Before beginning the notes on this chapter, I want to make two general reflections:

1. Isn't there a kind of contradiction between this chapter and the last paragraph of page 3 of the second volume, where the author expresses himself this way: "In the United States, as in all countries where the people rule, the majority governs in the name of the people. This majority is composed principally of a mass of men who, either by taste or by interest, sincerely desire the good of the country; agitating around this quite peaceful mass, parties work to draw it toward them and gain its support"?

2. I do not know if this chapter is well placed in the book. In one of the preceding chapters, entitled *Of the Right of Association,* the author says, p. 67: "In our time, the right of association has become a guarantee against the tyranny of the majority."

The logical order of ideas demands that the disadvantages be cited before the remedy. I observe, moreover, that the author must revise the sentence I have just transcribed and make it less absolute, if he does not want it to harm singularly the effect of the chapter on omnipotence (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 81–83).

It seems that the idea of the tyranny of the majority is mentioned for the first time on the occasion of a conversation with Sparks, 29 September 1831 (non-alphabetic notebooks 1 and 2, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 96). John Stuart Mill, following Tocqueville, will take up this expression again and use it in his famous essay *On Liberty.* Nonetheless, as Joseph Hamburger points out ("Mill and Tocqueville on Liberty," in John M. Robson and M. Laine, eds., *James and John Stuart Mill. Papers of the Centenary Conference,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976, pp. 111–25), if Mill uses the term, the consequences he derives from it are quite far removed from those of Tocqueville. H. O. Pappe as well is skeptical about the possible influence of Tocqueville on Mill ("Mill and Tocqueville," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 25, no. 2 (1964): 217–44).

Ludovic, the protagonist in *Marie,* also insists on the sway of opinion in America (I, pp. 165, 172–74, and 203).

Natural strength of the majority in democracies.—Most of the American constitutions have artificially increased this natural strength.—How.—Binding mandates.—Moral dominion of the majority.—Opinion about its infallibility.—Respect for its rights.—What augments it in the United States.

The very essence of democratic governments is that the dominion of the majority be absolute; for, in democracies, nothing outside of the majority can offer resistance.

Most of the American constitutions have also sought to augment this natural strength of the majority artificially.[1]

Of all political powers, the legislature is the one that most willingly obeys the majority. The Americans have wanted the members of the legislature to be named *directly* by the people, and for a *very short* term, in order to force them to submit not only to the general views, but also to the daily passions of their constituents.

They have taken the members of the two houses from the same classes and named them in the same way; in this way, the movements of the legislative body are almost as rapid and no less irresistible than those of a single assembly.[c]

1. *We have seen, at the time of the examination of the federal Constitution, that the law-makers of the Union made contrary efforts.*[b] *The result of these efforts was to make the federal government more independent in its sphere than the government of the states. But the federal government is scarcely in charge of anything except foreign affairs; the state governments really run American society.*

b. ≠So in democratic republics the majority forms a true power. And after it, the body that represents it. The political body that best represents the majority is the legislature. To augment the prerogatives of this body is to augment the power of the majority.

Nonetheless, this power of the majority can be moderated in its exercise by the efforts of the law-maker. The authors of the federal Constitution worked in this direction. They sought to hinder the march of the majority. In the individual states, one tried hard, in contrast, to make the march of the majority more rapid and more irresistible≠ (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 14).

c. Hervé de Tocqueville: "If this is so, we do not see clearly why the American constitutions created two houses; it is probable that there is something too absolute in the author's phrasing" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 83).

Within the legislature thus constituted, the Americans gathered together nearly the entire government.

At the same time that the law increased the strength of powers that were naturally strong, it weakened more and more those that were naturally weak. It gave to the representatives of the executive power neither stability nor independence; and, by subjecting them completely to the caprices of the legislature, it took from them the little influence that the nature of democratic government would have allowed them to exercise.[d]

In several states, the law delivered the judicial power to election by the majority; and in all, it made the existence of the judicial power dependent, in a way, on the legislative power, by leaving to the representatives the right to fix the salaries of judges annually.[e]

Customs have gone still further than the laws.

In the United States, a custom is spreading more and more that will end by making the guarantees of representative government empty; it happens very frequently that the voters, while naming a deputy, trace a plan of conduct for him and impose on him a certain number of definite obligations from which he cannot deviate in any way. Except for the tumult, it is as if the majority itself deliberated in the public square.

Several particular circumstances in America also tend to make the power of the majority not only predominant, but irresistible.

The moral dominion of the majority is based in part on the idea that there is more enlightenment and wisdom in many men combined than in one man alone, more in the number than in the choice of legislators. It is the theory of equality applied to minds. This doctrine attacks the pride of

d. "In America executive power is nothing and can do nothing. The entire strength of government is entrusted to society itself, organized under the most democratic form that has ever existed. In America all danger comes from the people; it is never born outside" (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 21).

e. "Importance of the judicial power as barrier to democracy, its weakness. See *Federalist,* p. 332 [No. 78 (ed.)].

"In most states, judges are dependent upon the legislature for their salaries; in several, elected by the legislature or by the people. Growing causes of tyranny" (YTC, CVe, p. 64). Cf. conversations with Mr. Storer, Spencer, and Judge MacLean (non-alphabetic notebooks 1, 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 69, 124 and 127).

man in its last refuge. Consequently the minority admits it with difficulty and gets used to it only with time. Like all powers, and perhaps more than any other, the power of the majority thus needs to last in order to seem legitimate. When it is beginning to be established, it makes itself obeyed by force; only after living under its laws for a long time do you begin to respect it.

The idea that the right to govern society belongs to the majority because of its enlightenment was carried to the soil of the United States by the first inhabitants. This idea, which alone would be enough to create a free people, has today passed into the mores, and you find it in the least habits of life.

The French, under the old monarchy, held as a given that the king could do no wrong;[f] and when he happened to do something wrong, they thought that the fault was with his advisors. This facilitated obedience marvelously. You could murmur against the law, without ceasing to love and respect the law-maker. Americans have the same opinion about the majority.

The moral dominion of the majority is based as well on the principle that the interests of the greatest number must be preferred to those of the few. Now, it is easily understood that the respect professed for this right of the greatest number naturally increases or decreases depending on the state of the parties. When a nation is divided among several great irreconcilable interests, the privilege of the majority is often unrecognized, because it becomes too painful to submit to it.

If a class of citizens existed in America that the legislator worked to strip of certain exclusive advantages, held for centuries, and that he wanted to bring down from an elevated position and restore to the ranks of the multitude, it is probable that the minority would not easily submit to his laws.

But since the United States was populated by men equal to each other,

f. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not know why Alexis applies to the old monarchy the principle that the king could do no wrong. The Charter of 1814 and that of 1830 have this principle as a basis" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 83).

no natural and permanent dissidence is yet found among the interests of the various inhabitants.g

There is such a social state in which the members of the minority cannot hope to attract the majority because to do so it would be necessary to abandon the very object of the struggle that the minority wages against the majority. An aristocracy, for example, cannot become a majority while preserving its exclusive privileges, and it cannot allow its privileges to slip away without ceasing to be an aristocracy. [In these countries, it is almost impossible for the moral power of the majority ever to succeed in being recognized by all.]

In the United States, political questions cannot be posed in as general and absolute a way, and all parties are ready to recognize the rights of the

g. Majority./

The moral dominion of the majority is established with more difficulty than another because it is based upon ideas of equality shocking to many minds that have not become accustomed to it.

Like all other empires, it is lost by abuse. Tyranny of the majority leads to appeals by minorities to physical force. From that, confusion, anarchy and the despotism of one man. The American republics, far from raising the fear of anarchy at the present moment, raise only the fear of despotism of the majority; anarchy will come only as a consequence of this tyranny.

There is such a social state in which the minorities can never become majorities, without losing enormously or even ceasing to be. In these countries, the dominion of the majority can only be established with great difficulty and can only be maintained with even more difficulty. France in this case./

In America, the dominion of the majority will be overturned not because it lacks strength, but wisdom. The government is centralized in such a way that the governing majority is omnipotent. It will lack not physical force, but moral force. In all power exercised by the people, there is something variable, something of scant wisdom.

I would like someone to explain to me what is meant when this banal phrase is put forth: that an entire people cannot completely go beyond the limits of reason.

It is undoubtedly rare for an entire people to go beyond those limits. But what generally does the will of the people mean? A majority; but what is a majority taken as a whole if not an individual who has opinions and, most often, interests contrary to another individual called the minority?

Now, if you admit that an individual vested with omnipotence can abuse it against his adversaries, why would you not admit the same thing for the majority? As for me, I see only God who can be vested with omnipotence without disadvantage (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 2–3).

majority, because all hope one day to be able to exercise those rights to their profit.

So in the United States the majority has an immense power in fact and a power of opinion almost as great; and once the majority has formed on a question, there is, so to speak, no obstacle that can, I will not say stop, but even slow its course and leave time for the majority to hear the cries of those whom it crushes as it goes.

The consequences of this state of affairs are harmful and dangerous[h] for the future.

How the Omnipotence of the Majority in America Increases the Legislative and Administrative Instability That Is Natural to Democracies

How the Americans increase legislative instability, which is natural to democracy, by changing the legislator annually and by arming him with an almost limitless power.—The same effect produced in the administration.—In America a force infinitely greater, but less sustained than in Europe is brought to social improvements.

I spoke previously of the vices that are natural to the government of democracy; there is not one of them that does not grow at the same time as the power of the majority.

And, to begin with the most obvious of all.

Administrative instability is an evil inherent in democratic government, because it is in the nature of democracies to bring new men to power. But this evil is greater or lesser depending on the power and the means of action granted to the legislator.

In America sovereign power is handed over to the authority that makes the laws. That authority can rapidly and irresistibly abandon itself to each of its desires, and every year it is given other representatives. That is to say, what has been adopted is precisely the combination that most favors dem-

h. The manuscript says: ". . . very harmful and highly dangerous for the future."

ocratic instability and that allows democracy to apply its changeable will to the most important objects. [≠We have seen under the National Assembly and the Convention how, by granting omnipotence to the legislative body, the natural instability of law in republics increased more. These extreme consequences of a bad principle cannot recur in the same way in America because American society is not in revolution as French society then was and because there has been a long apprenticeship in liberty in America.≠]

America today is, therefore, the country in the world where laws have the shortest duration. Nearly all the American constitutions have been amended during the last thirty years. So, during this period, there is no American state that has not modified the principle of its laws.[j]

As for the laws themselves, it is sufficient to glance at the archives of the different states of the Union to be persuaded that in America the activity of the legislator never flags.[k] Not that the American democracy is by nature more unstable than another, but in the formation of the laws, it has been given the means to follow the natural instability of its inclinations.[2]

The omnipotence of the majority and the rapid and absolute manner in which its will is executed in the United States not only make the law unstable, but also exercise the same influence on the execution of the law and on the action of public administration.

Since the majority is the only power important to please, the works that it undertakes are ardently supported; but from the moment when its at-

j. In this place in the manuscript three paragraphs are found that Tocqueville will later add to chapter V of this second part. (It concerns the passage that begins with: "Many Americans consider . . ." and that concludes with the citation of Number 73 of the *Federalist,* pp. 155–56.)

k. To the side: "≠The omnipotence of the majority is not the first cause of the evil, but it infinitely increases it.≠"

2. *The legislative acts promulgated in the state of Massachusetts alone, from 1780 to today, already fill three thick volumes. It must be noted as well that the collection of which I speak was revised in 1823, and that many former or pointless laws were discarded. Now, the state of Massachusetts, which is no more populated than one of our departments, can pass for the most stable state in the entire Union, and the one that puts the most coherence and wisdom into its enterprises.*

tention goes elsewhere, all efforts cease; whereas in the free States of Europe, in which administrative power has an independent existence and an assured position, the will of the legislator continues to be executed, even when he is occupied by other objects.

In America, much more zeal and activity is brought to certain improvements than is done elsewhere.

In Europe, an infinitely smaller, but more sustained social force is applied to the same things.

[I saw some striking examples of what I am advancing in a matter that I had particular occasion to examine in the United States.]

Several years ago some religious men undertook to improve the condition of prisons. The public was roused by their voice, and the regeneration of criminals became a popular undertaking.

Then new prisons arose. For the first time, the idea of reforming the guilty penetrated the jail at the same time as the idea of punishing him. But the happy revolution that the public joined with so much fervor and that the simultaneous efforts of citizens made irresistible could not be accomplished in one moment.

Alongside some new penitentiaries, the development of which was hastened by the desire of the majority, the old prisons still existed and continued to house a great number of the guilty. The latter seemed to become more unhealthy and more corrupting as the new ones became more reforming and healthier. This double effect is easily understood: the majority, preoccupied by the idea of founding the new establishment, had forgotten the one that already existed. By each person averting his eyes from the object that no longer attracted the regard of the master, supervision had ceased. At first the salutary bonds of discipline were seen to relax and then, soon after, to break. And alongside the prison, lasting monument of the mildness and enlightenment of our time, was found a dungeon that recalled the barbarism of the Middle Ages.

[In France, it would be very difficult to find prisons as good and as bad as in the United States.]

Tyranny of the Majority[m]

How the principle of sovereignty of the people must be understood.—Impossibility of conceiving a mixed government.—The sovereign power must be somewhere.—Precautions that must be taken to moderate its action.—These precautions have not been taken in the United States.—What results.

I regard as impious and detestable this maxim that in matters of government the majority of a people has the right to do anything, and yet I consider that the will of the majority is the origin of all powers. Do I contradict myself?

A general law exists that has been made, or at least adopted, not only by the majority of such or such people, but by the majority of all men. This law is justice.

So justice forms the limit of the right of each people [to command].

A nation is like a jury charged with representing universal society and with applying justice, which is its law. Should the jury, which represents society, have more power than the very society whose laws it applies?[n]

So when I refuse to obey an unjust law, I am not denying the right of the majority to command; I am only appealing from the sovereignty of the people to the sovereignty of the human race.

m. Title in the manuscript: TYRANNICAL EFFECTS OF THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE MAJORITY.

Concerning the idea of tyranny of the majority, Morton Horwitz ("Tocqueville and the Tyranny of the Majority," *Review of Politics,* 28, 1966, pp. 293–307) defends the idea that Tocqueville, when speaking of the majority in numerical terms, is thinking about France, not about America, and that he thinks about America only when he considers the moral tyranny of the majority. Also see David Spitz, "On Tocqueville and the Tyranny of Public Sentiment," *Political Science* 9, no. 2 (1957): 3–13.

n. In the margin: "≠Its effects:
on actions,
on words,
on character and thoughts.
"That it is by the abuse of the strength of their government and not by its weakness that the American republics are threatened with perishing.≠"

There are men who are not afraid to say that, in objects that concern only itself, a people could not go entirely beyond the limits of justice and reason, and that we should not be afraid, therefore, to give all power to the majority that represents a people. But that is the language of a slave.

So what is a majority taken as a whole, if not an individual who has opinions and, most often, interests contrary to another individual called the minority. Now, if you admit that an individual vested with omnipotence can abuse it against his adversaries, why would you not admit the same thing for the majority? Have men, by gathering together, changed character? By becoming stronger, have they become more patient in the face of obstacles?[3] As for me, I cannot believe it; and the power to do everything that I refuse to any one of my fellows, I will never grant to several.[o]

Not that I believe that, to preserve liberty, several principles can be mixed together in the same government, in a way that truly opposes them to each other.

The government called mixed has always seemed to me a chimera. Truly

3. *No one would want to maintain that a people is not able to abuse strength vis-à-vis another people. Now, parties are like small nations within a large one; in relation to each other, they are like foreigners.*

If you agree that a nation can be tyrannical toward another nation, how can you deny that a party can be so toward another party?

o. Democracy./

Tyranny of democracy. Confusion of all powers in the hands of the *assemblies.* Weakness of the executive power to react against these assemblies of which it is only an instrument. See very curious article of the *Federalist* on this subject, p. 213 [No. 48 (ed.)]; *id.,* p. 205 [No. 46 (ed.)]; *id.,* p. 224 [No. 51 (ed.)]./

Moreover, that is a required result of the rule of democracy. There is strength only in the people; there can only be strength in the constitutional power that represents the people./

In America the executive and judicial powers are absolutely dependent upon the legislative power. It fixes their salaries in general, modifies their organization; and nothing is provided for them to be able to resist its *encroachments* [word in English in the original (ed.)]. *Federalist,* p. 205 [No. 46 (ed.)]./

Necessity of taking measures to avoid the abuse of all powers, even those that seem most legitimate. *Federalist,* p. 223 [No. 51 (ed.)] (YTC, CVb, pp. 25–26).

speaking, there is no mixed government (in the sense that is given to this term), because, in each society, you eventually discover a principle of action that dominates all the others.

England of the last century, which was particularly cited as an example of this sort of government, was an essentially aristocratic State, although some large elements[p] of democracy were found within it; for the laws and the mores there were established in such a way that eventually the aristocracy would always predominate and lead public affairs as it willed.

The error arose because, seeing the interests of the great constantly in conflict with those of the people, only the struggle was considered, instead of paying attention to the result of this struggle, which was the important point. When a society truly comes to have a mixed government, that is a government equally divided among contrary principles, it enters into revolution or dissolves.[q]

So I think that a social power superior to all others must always be placed somewhere, but I believe liberty is in danger when this power encounters no obstacle that can check its course[r] and give it time to moderate itself.

Omnipotence in itself seems to me something bad and dangerous.[s] Its

p. The manuscript says, on the other hand: "some democratic institutions."

This paragraph makes direct reference to Montesquieu. Cf. note n of p. 28.

q. If here Tocqueville denies the existence of mixed government, he is, nonetheless, about to explain in the following paragraphs his theory of a social and political organization in which every principle must necessarily be opposed by another. (The idea has been mentioned in the editor's introduction.)

r. In the manuscript: "that can, if not entirely stop, at least check its course . . ."

s. "Despotism is at the two ends of sovereignty, when one man rules and when the majority governs. Despotism is attached to omnipotence, whoever the representative may be" (YTC, CVe, p. 65).

Guizot defends a similar idea:

> The partisans of divine right had said: there is only one God; so there should be only one king, and all power belongs to him because he is the representative of God. The partisans of sovereignty of the people have said: there is only one people; so there should be only one legislative assembly; for it represents the people. In both cases the error is the same, and it leads equally to despotism. There is only one God and there

exercise seems to me beyond the power of man, whoever he may be; and I see only God who can, without danger, be all powerful, because his wisdom and his justice are always equal to his power. So there is no authority on earth so respectable in itself, or vested with a right so sacred, that I would want to allow it to act without control or to dominate without obstacles. So when I see the right and the ability to do everything granted to whatever power, whether called people or king, democracy or aristocracy, whether exercised in a monarchy or a republic, I say: the seed of tyranny is there and I try to go and live under other laws.

What I most criticize about democratic government as it has been organized in the United States, is not its weaknesses as many people in Europe claim, but on the contrary, its irresistible strength.[t] And what repels me the

is only one people, that is certain; but this God is nowhere on earth, for neither one man nor the whole people is God, knows his law perfectly and wants it constantly. So no *de facto* power should be unique, for unity of the *de facto* power assumes complete *de jure* power which no one possesses or can possess (*Journal des cours publics,* Paris: au bureau du Journal, 1821–1822, II, p. 293).

In another place, Guizot refers to Pascal for his argument: "*'Unity that is not multiple,'* says Pascal, *'is tyranny.'* From that follows the necessity for two chambers" (*ibid,* p. 17). The principle of Guizot's representative system is nothing other than the destruction of all absolute power. This principle requires the provision of the jury, freedom of the press, the division of powers and the organization of the legislative power into two chambers. These elements are repeated in Tocqueville's theory.

t. How democracy leads to tyranny and will succeed in destroying liberty in America. See the beautiful theory presented on this point in the *Federalist,* p. 225 [No. 51 (ed.)]. It is not because powers are not concentrated; it is because they are too concentrated that the American republics will perish. The tyranny of one man will appear more tolerable than the tyranny of the majority.

"A good government implies two things: first, fidelity to the object of government, which is the happiness of the people; secondly, a knowledge of the means by which that object can be best attained. Some governments are deficient in both these qualities; most governments are deficient in the first. [I (ed.)] Scruple not to assert that, in the American governments, too little attention has been paid to the last. The federal Constitution avoids this error." *Federalist,* p. 268 [No. 62 (ed.)].

Tendency of republics to make the executive power only a passive agent, without any strength whatsoever, *id.,* p. 207 [No. 47 (ed.)] (YTC, CVb, p. 26).

most in America is not the extreme liberty that reigns there; it is the slight guarantee against tyranny that is found.[u]

When a man or a party suffers from an injustice in the United States, to whom do you want them to appeal? To public opinion? That is what forms the majority. To the legislative body? It represents the majority and blindly obeys it. To the executive power? It is named by the majority and serves it as a passive instrument. To the police? The police are nothing other than the majority under arms. To the jury? The jury is the majority vested with the right to deliver judgments. The judges themselves, in certain states, are elected by the majority. However iniquitous or unreasonable the measure that strikes you may be, you must therefore submit to it [or flee. <What is that if not the very soul of tyranny under the forms of liberty?>].[4]

u. "≠It is very much easier to contest a principle than its consequences. You easily prove to a king that he does not have the right to sacrifice the interest of the State to his own, but when the majority oppresses you, you are forced to recognize its right before attacking the use of that right≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 81).

4. *In Baltimore, at the time of the War of 1812, a striking example was seen of the excesses to which the despotism of the majority can lead.*[v] *At this time the war was very popular in Baltimore. A newspaper that was strongly against the war aroused the indignation of the inhabitants by its conduct. The people gathered, broke the presses, and attacked the newspaper office. Some wanted to call the militia, but it did not answer the call. In order to save the unfortunate journalists, who were threatened by the public furor, it was decided to put them in jail, like criminals. This precaution was useless; during the night, the people gathered again; the magistrates were unable to get the militia to come; the prison was forced open; one of the journalists was killed on the spot; the others were left for dead; the guilty, brought before a jury, were acquitted.*

I said one day to an inhabitant of Pennsylvania: "Please explain to me why, in a state founded by Quakers and renowned for its tolerance, emancipated Negroes are not allowed to exercise the rights of citizens. They pay taxes; isn't it just that they vote?"—"Don't insult us, he answered, by thinking that our legislators have committed such a gross act of injustice and intolerance."—"So, among you, Blacks have the right to vote?"—"Undoubtedly."—"Then, how come at the polling place this morning, I did not see a single one in the crowd?"—"This is not the fault of the law," the American said to me; "Negroes, it is true, have the right to present themselves at elections, but they abstain voluntarily it seems."—"That is very modest of them."—"Oh! it isn't that they refuse to go, but they are afraid that they will be mistreated there. Among us, it sometimes happens that the law lacks force when the majority does not support it. Now, the majority is imbued with the greatest prejudices against Negroes, and magistrates do not feel they have the strength to guarantee to the latter the rights that the legislator has conferred."—"What! the majority which has the privilege of making the law, also wants to have that of disobeying the law?"

v. Mr. Cruse, editor of a newspaper in Baltimore, told this anecdote to Tocqueville

Suppose, in contrast, a legislative body composed in such a way that it represents the majority, without necessarily being the slave of the majority's passions; an executive power that has a strength of its own; and a judicial power independent of the two other powers; you will still have a democratic government, but there will no longer be hardly any chances for tyranny.

[{If the effects of this tyranny are not felt more in America, it is because America is a new country where political passions are still not very deep and where so vast a field for human activity is presented that interests are rarely opposed to each other.}]

I am not saying that at the present time in America tyranny is frequently practiced; I am saying that no guarantee against tyranny is found there, and that the causes for the mildness of government must be sought in circumstances and in mores, rather than in laws.[w]

Effects of the Omnipotence of the Majority on the Arbitrariness of American Public Officials

Liberty that American law leaves to officials within the circle that it draws.—Their power.

Arbitrariness must be carefully distinguished from tyranny. Tyranny can be exercised by means of the law itself, and then it is not arbitrary; arbitrariness can be exercised in the interests of the governed, and then it is not tyrannical.[x]

(note of 4 November 1831, pocket notebook 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 187–88). The interlocutor of the other conversation is George Washington Smith (conversation of 24 October 1831, alphabetic notebook B, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 246–47).

w. "≠The omnipotence of the majority seems to me the most serious disadvantage attached to democratic governments and the source of their greatest dangers≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 81).

x. In the manuscript: "≠Arbitrariness must be carefully distinguished from tyranny, and tyranny from arbitrariness. Arbitrariness can be not tyrannical, and tyranny can be not arbitrary. In the United States there is almost never arbitrariness, but sometimes there is tyranny.≠"

To the side: "≠When Louis XIV regulated by himself and with sovereign power the

Tyranny usually makes use of arbitrariness, but if necessary it knows how to do without it.

In the United States, the omnipotence of the majority, at the same time that it favors the legal despotism of the legislator, also favors the arbitrariness of the magistrate. Because the majority has absolute control over making the law and supervising its execution, and has equal control over those governing and those governed, it regards public officials as its passive agents and willingly relies on them to take care of serving its designs. So the majority does not enter in advance into the details of the duties of public officials and scarcely takes the trouble to define their rights. It treats them as a master would treat his servants, if, having their behavior always in view, he could direct or correct their conduct at every moment.

In general, the law leaves American officials much more free than ours within the circle that is drawn around them. Sometimes the majority even allows them to go outside of this circle. Guaranteed by the opinion of the greatest number and strong because of their support, they then dare things that a European, accustomed to the spectacle of arbitrariness, still finds astonishing. In this way, habits being formed within liberty that, one day, will be able to become destructive to it.

Of the Power Exercised by the Majority in America over Thought

In the United States, when the majority has irrevocably settled on a question, it is no longer discussed.—Why.—Moral power that the majority exercises over thought.—Democratic republics immaterialize despotism.

When you come to examine how thought is exercised in the United States, you notice very clearly to what extent the power of the majority surpasses all the powers that we know in Europe.

commercial rights [doubtful reading (ed.)] of his subjects, he committed an arbitrary but not a tyrannical act.

"When the National Assembly ordered [blank space in the manuscript (ed.)], it committed a tyrannical act but not an arbitrary act.≠"

Thought is an invisible and almost imperceptible power that scoffs at all tyrannies [that scoffs amid chains and executioners. {You could say of it what Malherbe said of death: it does not stop at the gates of the Louvre any more than at the door of the poor man}].[y] Today, the most absolute sovereigns of Europe cannot prevent certain ideas hostile to their authority from circulating silently within their States and even within their courts. It is not the same in America; as long as the majority is uncertain, people speak; but as soon as the majority has irrevocably decided, everyone is silent, and friends as well as enemies then seem to climb on board together. The reason for this is simple. There is no monarch so absolute that he can gather in his hands all of society's forces and vanquish opposition in the way that a majority vested with the right to make and execute laws can [at will, vested with the right and the force].

A king, moreover, has only a physical power that acts on deeds and cannot reach wills; but the majority is vested with a strength simultaneously physical and moral, which acts on the will as well as on actions and which at the same time prevents the deed and the desire to do it.

I know of no country where, in general, there reigns less independence of mind and true freedom of discussion than in America.

There is no religious or political theory that may not be freely preached in the constitutional States of Europe and that does not penetrate into the others [{and I do not know of} ≠a European people so powerful and so strong that it is not forced from time to time to hear hard truths. It is not this way in America.≠]; for there is no country in Europe so subject to a single power that someone who wants to speak the truth does not find some support capable of insuring him against the results of his independence. If he has the misfortune to live under an absolute government, he often has the people for him; if he lives in a free country, he can find shelter, as needed, behind royal authority. The aristocratic part of society sustains him in democratic countries, and democracy in the others. But within a democracy organized as that of the United States, only a single power

y. In *Consolation à Monsieur Du Périer, gentilhomme d'Aix-en-Provence, sur la mort de sa fille.*

is found, a single element of strength and success, and nothing outside of it.[z]

In America, the majority draws a formidable circle around thought. Within these limits, the writer is free; but woe to him if he dares to go beyond them. It isn't that he has to fear an auto-da-fé, but he is exposed to all types of distasteful things and to everyday persecutions. A political career is closed to him; he has offended the only power that has the ability to open it to him. Everything is denied him, even glory. Before publishing his opinions, he believed he had some partisans; it seems to him that he has them no longer, now that he has revealed himself to all; for those who censure him speak openly, and those who think as he does, without having his courage, keep quiet and distance themselves. He gives in; finally, under the daily effort, he yields and returns to silence, as though he felt remorse for having told the truth.

Chains and executioners, those are the crude instruments formerly used by tyranny; but today civilization has perfected even despotism itself, which seemed however to have nothing more to learn.

Princes had, so to speak, materialized violence; the democratic republics of today have made violence as entirely intellectual as the human will that it wants to constrain. Under the absolute government of one man, despotism, to reach the soul, crudely struck the body; and the soul, escaping from these blows, rose gloriously above it; but in democratic republics, tyranny does not proceed in this way; it leaves the body alone and goes right to the soul. The master no longer says: You will think like me or die; he says: You are free not to think as I do; your life, your goods, everything remains with you; but from this day on you are a stranger among us. You will keep your privileges as a citizen, but they will become useless to you. If you aspire to be the choice of your fellow citizens, they will not choose you, and if you ask only for their esteem, they will still pretend to refuse it to you. You will remain among men, but you will lose your rights to humanity. When you approach your fellows, they will flee from you like an impure being. And those who believe in your innocence, even they will

z. In the margin: "<≠Base circumlocutions of the Federalists.≠>"

abandon you, for people would flee from them in turn. Go in peace; I spare your life, but I leave you a life worse than death.

Absolute monarchies had dishonored despotism. Let us be careful that democratic republics do not rehabilitate it, and that, while making despotism heavier for some, they do not, in the eyes of the greatest number, remove its odious aspect and its degrading character.

Among the proudest nations of the Old World, books have been published that intended faithfully to portray the vices and absurdities of their contemporaries. La Bruyère lived at the palace of Louis XIV when he composed his chapter on the great, and Molière criticized the court in the plays that he had performed before the courtiers. But the dominating power in the United States does not understand being played in this way. The slightest reproach wounds it; the smallest biting truth shocks it, and everything from the forms of its language to its most solid virtues must be praised. No writer, no matter how famous, can escape this obligation to heap praise upon his fellow citizens. So the majority lives in perpetual self-adoration; only foreigners or experience can bring certain truths to the ears of Americans.

If America has not yet had great writers, we do not have to look elsewhere for the reasons: literary genius does not exist without freedom of the mind, and there is no freedom of the mind in America.[a]

The Inquisition was never able to prevent the circulation in Spain of books opposed to the religion of the greatest number. The dominion of the majority does better in the United States: it has removed even the thought of publishing such books. Unbelievers are found in America, but unbelief finds, so to speak, no organ there.[b]

a. Cf. chapter XIII of the first part of the third volume.

b. The ideas of this paragraph were suggested to Tocqueville by a doctor in Baltimore, Mr. Stuart (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 115).

A note on a slip of paper attests to Tocqueville's dissatisfaction concerning this part of the chapter:

> I have put two distinct ideas within the same expressions, which is a great defect./
>
> That tyranny in America acts directly on the soul and does not torment the body results from two causes:

You see governments that strive to protect morals by condemning the authors of licentious books. In the United States, no one is condemned for this kind of work; but no one is tempted to write them. It is not that all citizens have pure morals, but the majority is steady in its morals.

Here, the use of power is undoubtedly good. I am, consequently, speaking only about the power itself. This irresistible power is an unremitting fact, and its good usage is only an accident. [Doesn't the majority in Paris acquire a taste for the filth that sullies our theatres daily?]

Effect of Tyranny of the Majority on the National Character of the Americans; Of the Courtier Spirit in the United States

Until now the effects of tyranny of the majority are felt on mores more than on the running of society.—They arrest the development of men of great character.—Democratic republics organized like those of the United States put the courtier spirit within reach of the greatest number.—Evidence of this spirit in the United States.—Why there is more patriotism among the people than among those who govern in their name.

The influence of what precedes is still felt only weakly in political society; but its harmful effects are already noticeable on the national character of the Americans. I think that the small number of outstanding men who appear today on the political stage must be attributed, above all, to the

1. Because it is exercised by a *majority* and not by a *man.* A man, never able to obtain the voluntary support of the mass, cannot inflict on his enemy the moral torment that arises from isolation and public scorn. He is forced to act *directly* in order to reach his enemy.

2. Because in fact mores have become milder and that despotism has been perfected and *intellectualized.*

This same note also exists in YTC, CVh, 3, p. 59; (the copyist indicates that the original is not in Tocqueville's hand).

always increasing action of the despotism of the majority in the United States.

When the American Revolution broke out, outstanding men appeared in large number; then public opinion led and did not tyrannize over wills. The famous men of this period, freely joining the movement of minds, had a grandeur of their own; they shed their brilliance on the nation and did not derive it from the nation.

In absolute governments, the great who are near the throne flatter the passions of the master and willingly bow to his caprices. But the mass of the nation does not lend itself to servitude; it often submits out of weakness, habit or ignorance, sometimes out of love of royalty or the king. We have seen peoples take a type of pleasure or pride in sacrificing their will to that of the prince and, in this way, give a kind of independence of soul to the very act of obedience. Among these peoples much less degradation than misery is found. There is, moreover, a great difference between doing what you do not approve or pretending to approve what you do; the one is done by a weak man, but the other belongs only to the habits of a valet.[c]

In free countries, in which each person is more or less called to give his opinion on matters of State; in democratic republics, in which public life is constantly mingled with private life, in which the sovereign is approachable from all sides, and in which it is only a matter of raising one's voice to reach the sovereign's ear, many more people are found who seek to bank on the sovereign's weaknesses and to live at the expense of the sovereign's passions, than in absolute monarchies. Not that men there are naturally worse than elsewhere, but temptation is stronger and is offered to more people at the same time. A much more general debasing of souls results.

Democratic republics put the courtier spirit within reach of the greatest number and make it penetrate into all classes at the same time. It is one of the principal reproaches that can be made against them.

c. The manuscript says "lackey."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "Trivial expression that, moreover, attacks an entire class that at present is no less proud than another" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 87).

That is true, above all, in democratic states organized like the American republics, in which the majority possesses such absolute and irresistible dominion, that, in a way, you must renounce your rights as a citizen and, so to speak, your position as a man when you want to deviate from the road marked out by the majority.

Among the immense crowd, in the United States, that pushes into a political career, I saw very few men who showed this virile candor, this manly independence of thought, that often distinguished Americans in former times and that, wherever it is found, forms the salient feature of great characters. At first view, you would say that in America minds have all been formed on the same model because they so exactly follow the same paths. Sometimes, it is true, the foreigner will encounter some Americans who deviate from the rigor of the formulas; these Americans happen to deplore the vice of the laws, the variableness of democracy and its lack of enlightenment; often they even go so far as to notice the defects that are spoiling the national character, and they indicate the measures that could be taken to correct those defects. But no one, except you, is listening to them; and you, to whom they confide these secret thoughts, you are only a passing foreigner. They willingly give you truths that are useless to you, and, coming into the public square, they use another language.

If these lines ever reach America, I am sure of two things: first, that readers will all raise their voices to condemn me; second, that many among them will absolve me deep down in their conscience.[d]

I have heard country spoken about in the United States. I have encountered true patriotism among the people; I have often searched in vain for these two things among those who lead the people. This is easily understood

d. Democracy./

The greatest moral evil that results from the dominion of democracy is that it puts the courtier spirit within reach of everyone.

[In the margin: Here the character of courtiers.]

In democratic republics the number of courtiers is immense; the only difference from monarchies is that these are courtiers with bad taste.

The Americans have only two means to gain the truth, the *voice* of foreigners and *experience* (YTC, CVe, pp. 62–63).

by analogy: despotism depraves the one submitted to it much more than the one who imposes it. In absolute monarchies, the king often has great virtues; but the courtiers are always vile.

[≠What I blame democratic republics for is putting the courtier spirit within reach of such a large number.≠]

It is true that courtiers, in America, do not say: Sire and Your Majesty, a grand and capital difference; but they talk constantly about the natural enlightenment of their master. They do not raise the question of knowing which one of the virtues of the prince most merits adoration; for they assert that he possesses all virtues, without having acquired them and, so to speak, without wanting to do so. They do not give him their wives and daughters so that he would deign to elevate them to the rank of his mistresses; but by sacrificing their opinions to him, they prostitute themselves.

Moralists and philosophers in America are not forced to envelop their opinions in veils of allegory; but, before hazarding an annoying truth, they say: We know that we are speaking to a people too far above human weaknesses ever to lose control of itself. We would not use such language, if we did not address men whose virtues and enlightenment make them alone, among all others, worthy of remaining free.

How could those who flattered Louis XIV do better?

As for me, I believe that in all governments, whatever they are, baseness will attach itself to strength and flattery to power. And I know only one way to prevent men from degrading themselves: it is to grant to no one, with omnipotence, the sovereign power to debase them.

That the Greatest Danger to the American Republics Comes from the Omnipotence of the Majority

Democratic republics risk perishing by the bad use of their power, and not by powerlessness.—The government of the American republics more centralized and more energetic than that of the monarchies of Europe.—Danger that results.—Opinion of Madison and of Jefferson on this subject.

Governments usually perish by powerlessness or by tyranny. In the first case, power escapes from them; in the other, it is wrested from them.[e]

Many men, seeing democratic States[f] fall into anarchy, have thought that government in these States was naturally weak and powerless. The truth is that, once war has flared up there among the parties, government loses its effect on society. But I do not think that the nature of a democratic power is to lack strength and resources; I believe, on the contrary, that it is almost always the abuse of its forces and the bad use of its resources that make it perish. Anarchy is almost always born out of its tyranny or its lack of skill, but not out of its powerlessness.

Stability must not be confused with strength, the greatness of something

e. Washington, 15 January 1832.

There are two ways for a government to perish:

1. By lack of power (like the first Union, for example).
2. By bad use of power, like all tyrannies.

It is by this last evil that the American republics will perish.

The first mode is more rapid than the second. The latter is no less certain (YTC, BIIb, p. 13).

This note does not appear in YTC, CVe and has not been published in *Voyage, OC,* V, 1. YTC, BIIb, and YTC, CVe are two different copies of the same original, but copy BIIb, which is later, contains texts that do not appear in the first copy.

f. The manuscript says "free States."

with its duration. In democratic republics, the power that leads[5] society is not stable, for it often changes hands and objectives. But, wherever it goes, its strength is nearly irresistible.

The government of the American republics seems to me as centralized and more energetic than that of the absolute monarchies of Europe. So I do not think that they will perish from weakness.[6]

If liberty is ever lost in America, it will be necessary to lay the blame on the omnipotence of the majority that will have brought minorities to despair and will have forced them to appeal to physical force. Then you will see anarchy, but it will arrive as a consequence of despotism.

President James Madison expressed the same thoughts (see the *Federalist,* No 51.)

> It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. [. . . (ed.) . . .] Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit.
>
> In a society under the forms of which the stronger faction can readily unite and oppress the weaker, anarchy may as truly be said to reign as in a state of nature, where the weaker individual is not secured against the violence of the stronger; and as, in the latter state, even the stronger individuals[g] are prompted, by the uncertainty of their condition, to submit to a government which may protect the weak as well as themselves; so, in the former state, will the more powerful factions or parties be gradually induced, by a like motive, to wish for a government which will protect all parties, the weaker as well as the more powerful. It can be little doubted that if the State of Rhode Island was separated from the Confederacy and left to itself, the insecurity of rights under the popular form of government

5. *Power can be centralized in an assembly; then it is strong, but not stable. It can be centralized in a man; then it is less strong, but it is more stable.*

6. *It is useless, I think, to warn the reader that here, as in all the rest of the chapter, I am speaking, not about the federal government, but about the individual governments of each state that the majority leads despotically.*

g. In the manuscript: "the strongest individuals."

> within such narrow limits would be displayed by such reiterated oppressions of factious majorities that some power altogether independent of the people would soon be called for by the voice of the very factions whose misrule had proved the necessity of it.

[In another place he said: "[The] facility of lawmaking seems to be the disease to which our government is most liable."]

Jefferson also said: "The executive power, in our government, is not the only, and perhaps not the principal object of my concern. The tyranny of legislators is now and will be for many years to come the most formidable danger. That of the executive power will come in its turn, but in a more distant period."[7]

In this matter, I like to cite Jefferson in preference to all others, because I consider him the most powerful apostle democracy has ever had.[j]

7. *Letter from Jefferson to Madison, 15 March 1789.*[h]

h. In Conseil's edition, vol. I, pp. 340–41. Tocqueville quotes correctly from the French, but in the English Jefferson speaks about the "tyranny of the legislatures," not of the "legislators."

j. Édouard de Tocqueville: "In this chapter, very well written moreover and of great interest, you completely avoid the defect for which I reproached you in the notes for the preceding chapter. Here you coldly judge democracy, without admiration and without weakness; you tell the truth about it, all the while recognizing its qualities and its advantages" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 90).

CHAPTER 8

Of What Tempers Tyranny of the Majority in the United States

Absence of Administrative Centralization

The national majority does not have the idea of doing everything.—It is forced to use town and county magistrates in order to carry out its sovereign will.

Previously I distinguished two types of centralization; one, I called governmental, and the other administrative.[a]

Only the first exists in America; the second is almost unknown there.

If the power that directs American societies found these two means of government at its disposal, and combined, with the right to command everything, the ability and the habit of carrying out everything by itself; if, after establishing the general principles of government, it entered into the details of application, and after regulating the great interests of the country,

a. In America, there are a thousand natural causes that so to speak work by themselves toward moderating the omnipotence of the majority. The extreme similarity that reigns in the United States among all the interests, the material prosperity of the country, the diffusion of enlightenment and the mildness of mores, which is the necessary consequence of the progress of civilization, greatly favor the leniency of government.

I have already pointed out the different causes; the time has come to examine what barriers the institutions themselves have carefully raised against the power from which they derive.

Previously I distinguished . . . (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 15).

it could reach as far as individual interests, liberty would soon be banished from the New World.[b]

But, in the United States, the majority, which often has the tastes and instincts of a despot, still lacks the most advanced instruments of tyranny.

In none of the American republics has the central government ever taken charge of anything other than a small number of objects whose importance attracted its attention. It has never undertaken to regulate the secondary things of society. Nothing indicates that it has ever even conceived the desire to do so. The majority, while becoming more and more absolute, has not increased the attributions of the central power; it has only made it omnipotent in its sphere. Thus despotism can be very heavy at one point, but it cannot extend to all.[c]

Besides, however carried away the national majority may be by its passions; however ardent it is in its projects, it cannot in all places, in the same way, and in the same moment, make all citizens yield to its desires.[d] When the central government that represents the national majority

b. In the manuscript, the paragraph is written as follows: "The Americans must consider themselves fortunate that this is so: if the majority in the United States found the one, like the other, in its hands in order to compel obedience to its will, and if it combined, with the right to do everything, the ability and the habit of carrying everything out by its agents, its power would be, so to speak, without limits."

c. In notes taken by Beaumont for the writing of *Marie,* this is found in Tocqueville's hand:

> In the American republics the central government has never taken charge except of a small number of objects whose importance attracted its attention. It has never undertaken to direct the administration of the towns and counties [v: secondary things]. It does not seem ever to have conceived the desire to do so. Becoming more and more absolute has allowed the rule of the majority to regulate these objects with more sovereign authority, but has not increased the number of objects in its sphere. So despotism can be great, but it cannot extend to everything (YTC, Beaumont, CIX).

d. Two causes.

1. Splitting up of sovereignty.
2. Splitting up of administration.

Tyranny can be very great but it cannot be popular.

The Union cannot present a tyrannical majority. Each state could do it, but town administrations (illegible word).

has given orders as a sovereign, it must rely, for the execution of its command, on agents who often do not depend on it and that it cannot direct at every moment. So the municipal bodies and county administrations form like so many hidden reefs that slow or divide the tide of popular will. Were the law oppressive, liberty would still find a refuge in the way in which the law would be executed; the majority cannot get into the details, and, if I dare say so, into the puerilities of administrative tyranny. The majority does not even imagine that it can do so, for it is not entirely aware of its power. It still knows only its natural strength and is unaware of how far art could extend its limits.

This merits reflection.[e] If a democratic republic like that of the United States ever came to be established in a country where the power of one man had already established administrative centralization and introduced it into habits, as well as into laws, I am not afraid to say that, in such a republic, despotism would become more intolerable than in any of the absolute monarchies of Europe. It would be necessary to look to Asia in order to find something comparable.

The national majority finding itself opposed in its designs in this way by the majority of the inhabitants of a city or of a district, and tyranny [v: despotism] which can be very great at some points cannot become general.

If the majority rules the state, it also rules the town and the county; and since these two majorities can be opposed in their designs, liberty always finds some refuge, and despotism which can be irresistibly exercised at several points of the territory cannot become general, however (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 53–54).

Tocqueville here is quite close to the idea that Madison expresses in Number 10 of the *Federalist,* that the best barrier against tyranny is the great extent of the republic. Nonetheless there is no reference to this Number of the *Federalist* in the drafts.

e. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I observe generally that in the whole work the author makes extremely frequent use of this way of expressing himself.

"This chapter needs to be reviewed. I would in addition like the author to put there what he said about associations as barriers to omnipotence. That would be better placed here than in the chapter on associations where you speak about the remedy before indicating the malady" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 71).

Of the Spirit of the Jurist in the United States, and How It Serves as Counterweight to Democracy[f]

Usefulness of trying to find out what the natural instincts of the spirit of the jurist are.—Jurists, called to play a great role in the society that is trying to be born.—How the kind of work that jurists devote themselves to gives an aristocratic turn to their ideas.—Accidental causes that can oppose the development of these ideas.—Facility that the aristocracy has in uniting itself with jurists.—Advantage that a despot could draw from the jurists.—How the jurists form the only aristocratic element that is by nature able to combine with the natural elements of democracy.—Particular causes that tend to give an aristocratic

f. Influence exercised by the judicial power on the power of the majority./

When you examine political society in the United States, you notice at first glance only a single principle that seems to bind all the parts strongly together: the people appear as the sole power. Nothing seems able to oppose their will or to thwart their designs.

But here is a man who appears in a way above the people; he does not get his mandate from them; he has, so to speak, nothing to fear from their anger, nor anything to hope from their favor. He is vested, however, with more power than any one of the representatives of the people; for, with a single blow, he can strike with sterility the work emanating from the common will (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 14–15).

Rousseau (*Du contrat social,* book II, chapter VII), not wanting to limit the sovereignty of the people in any way, had to put the legislator outside of the political process. Tocqueville, who acknowledged absolute sovereignty in no power, makes the legislator a decisive element of political life.

Several conversations with American lawyers and jurists persuaded the author of the foremost role that lawyers and jurists play in political life. Cf. the conversation with Edward Everett of 24 January 1832 (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 151); the conversation with Mr. Latrobe of 30 October 1831 (*ibid.,* p. 110) and more especially the conversation with Mr. Gallatin of 10 June 1831 (non-alphabetic notebook 1, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 61), where the idea that lawyers constitute a body that serves as a counterweight to democracy is mentioned; the conversations with John C. Spencer of 17 and 18 July 1831 (*ibid.,* pp. 68–69), on the conservative effects of the American legal mentality. When Tocqueville takes up the argument again, he is also thinking of Blackstone (Cf. *Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with Nassau William Senior,* II, p. 44). Also see Gino Gorla, *Commento a Tocqueville. L'idea dei diritti* (Milan: Dott. A Guiffrè Editore, 1948, pp. 259–68).

turn to the spirit of the English and American jurists.—The American aristocracy is at the lawyers' bar and on the judges' bench.—Influence exercised by jurists on American society.—How their spirit enters into the legislatures, into the administration, and ends by giving the people themselves something of the instinct of magistrates.

[≠I said elsewhere that the American magistracy was vested with a great political power; it remains for me to see how it tends to exercise its power.

American judges are named by the executive power {or by the legislature}; they are hardly ever chosen by the people.

But had you made judges chosen directly by the people, by making them irremovable, you would have given them instincts entirely different from those of the people.

From the moment when a public official is vested with an office for life, he takes a personal interest in society remaining immobile. If he is not always the enemy of progress, he is definitely the enemy of revolutions, and if this official is a man of the law, he is naturally carried by education to prize stability and he becomes attached to stability by inclination.

In fact, in what could be called the spirit of the jurist there is something singularly aristocratic.

Whoever will not allow himself to be preoccupied by a fact but by the ensemble of facts, not by a particular period but by the succession of times, will easily discover this tendency in the spirit of the jurist.≠]

When you visit the Americans and study their laws, you see that the authority that they have given to jurists and the influence that the Americans have allowed them to take in government form today the most powerful barrier to the errors of democracy. To me this effect seems due to a general cause that it is useful to try to determine, because it can recur elsewhere.

Jurists have been mixed up in all the movements of political society in Europe for five hundred years. Sometimes they have served as instruments of the political powers; sometimes they have used the political powers as instruments. In the Middle Ages, jurists cooperated wonderfully in extending the domination of kings; since then, they have worked powerfully

to restrict this very power. In England, they were seen to unite intimately with the aristocracy; in France they revealed themselves as its most dangerous enemies. So do jurists yield only to sudden and momentary impulses, or, depending on circumstances, do they more or less obey instincts that are natural to them and that always recur? I would like to clarify this point; for jurists are perhaps called upon to play the first role in the political society trying to be born.

Men who have made law their specialty have drawn from this work habits of order, a certain taste for forms, a sort of instinctive love for the regular succession of ideas, that make them naturally strongly opposed to the revolutionary spirit and to the unthinking passions of democracy.

[{This effect is larger or smaller depending on how you study the law.

In countries like France, where all legislation is written [the jurist (ed.)] contracts the taste for what is regular and legal.}

≠Furthermore, in countries where the law of precedents rules, such as England and America, the taste and respect for what is old are almost always merged in the soul of the jurist with the love of what is legal.

It is not the same in countries where, as in France, the whole legislation is found written in codes.

The English jurist tries to determine what has been done; the French jurist, what the intention was. The first wants≠ evidence; the second, arguments. The one wants decisions; the other wants reasons. [Cf. infra (ed.)]]

The special knowledge that jurists acquire while studying the law assures them a separate rank in society. They form a sort of privileged class among intelligent people. Each day they rediscover the idea of this superiority in the exercise of their profession; they are masters of a necessary science, the knowledge of which is not widespread; they serve as arbiters among citizens, and the habit of leading the blind passions of the litigants toward the goal gives them a certain contempt for the judgment of the crowd. Add that they naturally form a *corps.* It isn't that they agree among themselves and head in concert toward the same point; but the community of study and unity of methods link their minds, as interest could unite their wills.

So you find hidden at the bottom of the soul of jurists a portion of the tastes and habits of the aristocracy. Like the aristocracy, they have an instinctive propensity for order, a natural love of forms; like the aristocracy, they conceive a great distaste for the actions of the multitude and secretly despise the government of the people.[g]

I do not want to say that these natural tendencies of jurists are strong enough to bind them in an irresistible way. What dominates jurists, as all men, is particular interest, and above all the interest of the moment.

There is a kind of society where men of the law cannot take a rank in the political world analogous to the one that they occupy in private life; you can be sure that, in a society organized in this way, the jurists [despite their natural tastes] will be very active agents of revolution. But then you must try to determine if the cause that leads them to destroy or to change arises among them from a permanent disposition or from an accident. It is true that jurists singularly contributed to overturning the French monarchy in 1789.[h] It remains to be known if they acted in this way because they had studied the laws, or because they could not contribute toward making them.[j]

g. The manuscript says: ". . . always scorn the people."
Hervé de Tocqueville:

> I do not know if jurists inwardly scorn the government of the people, but definitely they never express this scorn; because they are sure that the ease with which they handle words will always open a role for them in the government of the people. In general, of all classes, jurists are the one in which vanity is the most developed by popular successes. This vanity directs their outwardly expressed opinions and is the foundation of their actions.
>
> This vanity has much less effect when they have an established position as in America, but it will always be formidable when they have a position to establish, or when superiorities are found that offend them, which will always happen in a monarchy where absolute equality cannot be found and where they are too numerous for the places and for the influence that reasonably can be given to them (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 76).

h. Hervé de Tocqueville: "They contributed even more to overturning the Restoration, although a part of their desires was fulfilled" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 77).

j. Hervé de Tocqueville: "There is a gap here. Alexis throws himself toward another order of ideas before going deeply enough into those that precede. One or two more paragraphs are necessary here in order to explain more clearly the motives for the conduct of the jurists in 1789 and 1830" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 77).

Five hundred years ago, the English aristocracy put itself at the head of the people and spoke in their name; today it upholds the throne and makes itself the champion of royal authority.[k] The aristocracy, however, has instincts and tendencies that are its own.

You must also guard against taking isolated members of the corps for the corps itself.

In all free governments, of whatever form, you will find jurists among the first ranks of all parties. This same remark is also applicable to the aristocracy. Nearly all the democratic movements that have agitated the world have been led by nobles.

An elite body can never be sufficient for all the ambitions that it contains; there are always more talents and passions than posts, and you do not fail to find a large number of men there who, not able to grow great quickly enough by using the privileges of the corps, seek to grow great by attacking its privileges.

So I do not claim that a period will come when *all* jurists, or that in *all* times, most jurists must appear as friends of order and enemies of change.

I am saying that in a society where jurists occupy without dispute the elevated position that belongs to them naturally, [and with all the more reason in the society where they occupy the first rank] their spirit will be eminently conservative and will show itself to be antidemocratic.[m]

When the aristocracy closes its ranks to jurists, it finds in them enemies

k. Hervé de Tocqueville: "That is not exact; the English aristocracy only makes itself the champion of its privileges and of those of the clergy" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 77–78).

m. Édouard de Tocqueville:

> The sense of this paragraph must necessarily be changed, for this reflection could apply to all those of ambition, to all agitators, to all the anarchists of the world, as well as to jurists. There is no revolutionary who, reaching the first rank, does not reveal a *conservative* spirit, that is to say, who does not want to *conserve* this rank, that speaks for itself. So you must not, after saying that jurists do not have anarchic tendencies, give as proof their conduct and their passions that from this paragraph are precisely those of the anarchists of all times and in all places. Couldn't you say: *I am saying that in a society where jurists will occupy without dispute the rank that legitimately belongs to them, their spirit,* etc? (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 68–69).

all the more dangerous because, below the aristocracy in wealth and power, they are independent of the aristocracy by their work and feel themselves on its level by their enlightenment.

But every time the nobles have wanted to share some of their privileges with the jurists, these two classes have found it very easy to join together and have, so to speak, discovered themselves to be of the same family.

I am equally led to believe that it will always be easy for a king to make jurists the most useful instruments of his power.[n]

There is infinitely more natural affinity between men of the law and the executive power than between them and the people, although jurists often have to overthrow the first; just as there is more natural affinity between the nobles and the king than between the nobles and the people, even though you have often seen the superior classes of society combine with the others to struggle against royal power. [Jurists often fear the king, but they always despise the people.]

What jurists love above all things is the sight of order, and the greatest guarantee of order is authority. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that if they prize liberty, they generally put legality much above it; they fear tyranny less than arbitrariness and, provided that the legislator himself sees to taking independence away from men, they are more or less content.

So I think that the prince who, in the presence of an invasive democracy, would seek to break down the judicial power in his States and to diminish the political influence of jurists, would commit a great error. He would let go of the substance of authority in order to seize its shadow.

I do not doubt that it would be more profitable for him to introduce jurists into the government. After entrusting despotism to them in the form

n. Hervé de Tocqueville:

As for me, I believe that this will always be a nearly insoluble problem for a king. It would be necessary that near the sovereign there were neither court, nor in the State any great superiority that offended the vanity of the jurists. One objects that they love Louis-Philippe. That comes from the contempt that he inspires in them and that precisely makes each one of them believe he has the right to consider himself above Louis-Philippe, though he is the king. Alexis must take care not to be caught in a paradox, as much here as in what follows (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 78).

of violence, perhaps he would rediscover it in their hands with the features of justice and the law.

[As for me, I would never advise any people to leave to the courts the care of guaranteeing its liberty. I would be afraid that the courts would sacrifice it to monarchs or to themselves. This care concerns great political assemblies.]

The government of democracy is favorable to the political power of jurists. When the rich man, the nobleman and the prince are excluded from government, the jurists arrive there by right, so to speak; for then they are the only enlightened and skillful men that the people can choose outside of themselves.[o]

If jurists are led naturally toward the aristocracy and the prince by their tastes, they are led naturally toward the people by their interest.

Thus, jurists love the government of democracy, without sharing its tendencies and without imitating its weaknesses, double cause to be powerful by democracy and over democracy.

The people, in a democracy, do not distrust jurists, because they know that the interest of jurists is to serve their cause; they listen to them without anger, because they do not assume that jurists have an ulterior motive.[p] In fact, jurists do not want to overturn the government that democracy has established, but they strive constantly to lead it along a path that is not its own and by means that are foreign to it. The jurist belongs to the people by his interest and by his birth and to the aristocracy by his habits and his tastes; he is like the natural liaison between these two, like the link that unites them.

The body of jurists forms the only aristocratic element that can mingle with the natural elements of democracy without effort and combine with them in a happy and enduring way. I am not unaware of the faults inherent

o. "≠In America the second guarantee of liberty is found in the constitution of the judicial power. The absence of administrative centralization is a happy circumstance more than a result of the wisdom of the law-maker. But the judicial power in the United States is a barrier raised by design against the omnipotence of the majority. You can consider it as the only powerful or real obstacle that the American laws have placed in the path of the people≠" (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 16–17).

p. In the margin: "≠It is to jurists that democracy owes the ability to govern.≠"

in the spirit of jurists; without this mixture of the spirit of jurists with the democratic spirit, I doubt, however, that democracy could govern society for long, and I cannot believe that today a republic could hope to maintain its existence, if the influence of jurists in public affairs did not increase in proportion to the power of the people.

This aristocratic character that I see in the spirit of jurists is still more pronounced in the United States and in England than in any other country. This is due not only to the study of the law made by English and American jurists, but also to the very nature of legislation and to the position that these interpreters occupy among these two peoples.

The English and the Americans have kept the law of precedents, that is, they continue to draw from the opinions and legal decisions of their fathers the opinions that they must have in matters of the law and the decisions they must render.

So with an English or American jurist, the taste and respect for what is old is nearly always mingled with love of what is regular and legal.

This has still another influence on the turn of mind of jurists and consequently on the course of society.

The English or American jurist seeks what has been done; the French jurist, what you must have wanted to do; [the first, evidence; the second, arguments] the one wants judgments, the other wants reasons.

When you listen to an English or American jurist, you are surprised to see him so often cite the opinion of others, and to hear him speak so little about his own, while among us the contrary happens.

No affair that the French lawyer agrees to handle is so small that he treats it without introducing a system of his own ideas; and he will examine even the constituent principles of the law so that the court be pleased in this regard to have the boundary marker of a disputed inheritance moved back about six feet.

This sort of abnegation of his own sense made by the English and American jurist in order to rely on the sense of his fathers; this type of servitude, in which he is obliged to maintain his thought, must give the spirit of the jurist more timid habits and make him acquire more stationary tendencies in England and America than in France [for a fact is very much more immobile than an idea or an argument].

Our written laws are often difficult to understand, but everyone can read them; in contrast, there is nothing more obscure to the common people and less accessible to them than legislation founded on precedents. This need for the jurist in England and in the United States, this high idea of his knowledge, separate him more and more from the people, and end by putting him in a class apart. The French jurist is only a learned man, but the English or American man of the law in a way resembles the priests of Egypt; like them, he is the sole interpreter of an occult science.

The position that the men of the law occupy in England and in America exercises an influence no less great on their habits and their opinions. The aristocracy of England, which has taken care to draw to its bosom everything that had some natural analogy to it, has given a very great portion of consideration and power to jurists. In English society jurists are not at the first rank, but they consider themselves content with the rank that they occupy. They form something like the junior branch of the English aristocracy, and they love and respect their seniors, without sharing all their privileges. So the English jurists combine with the aristocratic interests of their profession the aristocratic ideas and tastes of the society in which they live.

Therefore in England, above all, you can see in relief the type of jurist that I am trying to paint: the English jurist esteems the laws, not so much because they are good as because they are old; and, if he sees himself reduced to modifying them on some point in order to adapt to the changes that societies are subjected to by time, he resorts to the most incredible subtleties in order to persuade himself that, by adding something to the work of his fathers, he is only developing their thought and completing their efforts. Do not hope to make him recognize that he is an innovator; he will consent to go to absurd lengths before admitting himself guilty of such a great crime. In England was born this legal spirit that seems indifferent to the heart of things in order to pay attention only to the letter, and that would rather go beyond reason and humanity than go beyond the law.

English legislation is like an ancient tree on which jurists have constantly grafted the strangest shoots, in the hope that, while producing different fruits, they will at least blend their foliage with the venerable stock that supports them.

In America, there are no nobles nor men of letters, and the people distrust the rich. So jurists form the superior political class and the most intellectual portion of society.[q] Thus, they could only lose by innovating: this adds a conservative interest to the natural taste that they have for order.

If you asked me where I place the American aristocracy, I would answer without hesitating that it is not among the rich who have no common bond that gathers them together. The American aristocracy is at the lawyers' bar and on the judges' bench.[r]

The more you think about what happens in the United States, the more you feel persuaded that in this country the body of jurists forms the most powerful and, so to speak, the sole counterweight of democracy.

In the United States you easily discover how appropriate the spirit of the jurist is, by its qualities, and I will say even by its faults, for neutralizing the vices inherent in popular government.

When the American people allow themselves to be intoxicated by their passions, or abandon themselves to the impetus of their ideas, jurists make them feel an almost invisible brake that moderates and stops them. To their democratic instincts, jurists secretly oppose their own aristocratic tendencies; to their love of novelty, the jurists' superstitious respect for what is old; to the immensity of their designs, the jurists' narrow views; to their disdain for rules, the jurists' taste for forms; and to their hotheadedness, the jurists' habit of proceeding slowly.

The courts are the most visible organs that the body of jurists uses to act upon democracy.

The judge is a jurist who, apart from the taste for order and rules that he acquired in the study of law, draws the love of stability also from his irremovability from office. His legal knowledge had already assured

q. In the margin: "≠Perhaps put here the large piece added at Baugy.≠"

r. I am not saying that the aristocratic spirit in the United States is found only among jurists; the rich in America, as everywhere else, certainly have great instincts for order and preservation. But they do not form a corps; they are not united together by shared habits, ideas, tastes. There is no intellectual bond that gathers their collective strength; they do not make a corps. The people distrust them and do not mix them into public affairs, while the jurists, who have more or less the same instincts as the rich, do not cause the people any fear (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 17–18).

him an elevated position among his fellows; his political power really places him in a rank apart, and gives him the instincts of the privileged classes.

Armed with the right of declaring laws unconstitutional, an American magistrate enters constantly into public affairs.[1] He cannot force the people to make laws, but at least he compels them not to be unfaithful to their own laws and to remain consistent.

I am not unaware that a secret tendency exists in the United States that leads the people to reduce the judicial power; in most of the particular state constitutions, the government, at the request of two legislative houses, can remove judges from the bench. Certain constitutions make the members of the courts *elective* and submit them to frequent reelection.[t] I dare to predict that sooner or later these innovations will have harmful results and that one day you will see that by diminishing the independence of the magistrates in this way you have attacked not only the judicial power but also the democratic republic itself.

It must not be believed, moreover, that in the United States the spirit of the jurist is enclosed only within the courtrooms; it extends well beyond.

Jurists, forming the only enlightened class that the people do not distrust, are naturally called to occupy most of the public offices. They fill the legislatures and are at the head of administrations, so they exercise a great influence on the formation of the law and on its execution. Jurists are obliged, however, to yield to the current of political opinion that carries them along; but it is easy to find indications of what they would do if they were free. The Americans, who have innovated so much in their political laws, have introduced only slight changes, and with great difficulty, into their civil laws, although several of these laws are strongly repugnant to their social state.[u] That is because in matters of civil law the majority is

1. *See in the first volume what I say about the judicial power.*[s]

s. The first part of the book, as the reader remembers, was published in two volumes.

t. A lawyer from Montgomery, in Alabama, had, on 6 January 1832, drawn the attention of the author to this fact (nonalphabetic notebooks 1 and 2, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 140–41).

u. Tocqueville considers this question in the last pages of chapter II of the first part of the first volume.

always obliged to rely on jurists; and the American jurists, left to their own choice, do not innovate.

It is a very strange thing for a Frenchman to hear the complaints that arise in the United States against the jurists' stationary spirit and their prejudices in favor of what is established.

The influence of the spirit of the jurist extends still farther than the precise limits that I have just traced.[v]

There is hardly any political question in the United States that sooner or later does not turn into a judicial question. From that, the obligation that the parties find in their daily polemics to borrow ideas and language from the judicial system. Since most public men are or have formerly been jurists, they make the habits and the turn of ideas that belong to jurists pass into the handling of public affairs. The jury ends up by familiarizing all classes with them. Thus, judicial language becomes, in a way, the common language; so the spirit of the jurist, born inside the schools and courtrooms, spreads little by little beyond their confines; it infiltrates all of society, so to speak; it descends to the lowest ranks, and the entire people finishes by acquiring a part of the habits and tastes of the magistrate.

In the United States, the jurists form a power that is little feared, that is scarcely noticed, that has no banner of its own, that yields with flexibility to the exigencies of time and gives way without resistance to all the movements of the social body. But this power envelops the entire society, pen-

v. It is easy to notice, if you look closely, that in all the states of the Union, the judicial power exercises a great influence over political affairs. But this influence is visible, above all, in the action of the federal courts. You know that the Constitution of the United States predominates over the particular constitutions just as the latter in turn predominate over simple laws. Now, I said elsewhere that the Constitution of the United States forbids the provincial legislatures to introduce retroactive provisions into their penal laws and to damage certain vested rights. To take these two courses of action away from the particular states was to wrest from them the very weapons of tyranny. So every time that legislators pass laws of this type, they are attacked as unconstitutional before the federal courts. The federal judicial system then comes to put itself as a disinterested arbiter between the majority that wants to oppress and the individual that it oppresses.[1] It interposes itself among the local passions whose ardor can be compared only to those fraternal hatreds about which Tacitus speaks.

1. I do not know if that is true in as absolute a way as I indicate. To research. See notably Story, p. 498 (YTC, CVh, 5, pp. 22–23).

etrates into each of the classes that compose society, works on society in secret, acts constantly on society without society's knowledge and ends by shaping society according to its desires.

Of the Jury in the United States Considered as a Political Institution[w]

The jury, which is one of the modes of sovereignty of the people, must be put in harmony with the other laws that establish this sovereignty.—Composition of the jury in the United States.—Effects produced by the jury on the national character.—Education that it gives to the people.—How it tends to establish the influence of magistrates and to spread the spirit of the jurist.

Since my subject has led me naturally to talk about the judicial system in the United States, I will not abandon this matter without dealing with the jury.

w. Jury./

The jury is at the very same time an energetic means to make the people rule and the most effective means to teach them to rule./

Since I am on the judicial system, I want to talk about the jury./

Democratic or aristocratic, but never monarchical, always republican./

[In the margin: As for me, I find that when you deal with the jury the political point of view absorbs all others so to speak; the jury is above all a political institution; it is from this point of view that you must always judge it.] There would be a book to do on the ways in which the Americans make the responsibility of the jury apply in criminal and civil matters, but here I only want to consider it from the political point of view (YTC, CVh, 5, p. 31).

These and other ideas had been sketched by Tocqueville in two notes dated respectively 11 October 1831 and 12 January 1832 (pocket notebooks 3, 4 and 5, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 181–82, 201–2). The travel notebooks contain numerous references to the jury, especially notebook F, which is dedicated exclusively to civil and criminal law in America. On the role of the jury in civil matters, see the conversation of 21 September 1831 with Senator Francis Gray and the conversation with a lawyer from Montgomery (nonalphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 91 and 142). During his journey, Tocqueville attended a hearing in a *circuit court* (George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* chapter XXVIII).

Tocqueville considers that mores and circumstances act as well against tyranny of the majority. These two other obstacles to the power of the majority are set forth in chapter IX, which initially concluded the work. See note a on p. 277 and note e on p. 452.

Two things must be distinguished: the jury as a judicial institution and as a political institution.

If it was a matter of knowing to what extent the jury, and above all the jury in civil matters, serves the good administration of justice, I would admit that its usefulness could be contested.

The institution of the jury was born in a society that was little advanced, where hardly anything was submitted to the courts except simple questions of fact; and it is not a simple task to adapt the jury to the needs of a very civilized people, when the relationships among men are singularly multiplied and have taken on a complicated and intellectual character.[2]

My principal goal, at this moment, is to envisage the political side of the jury; another path would take me away from my subject. As for the jury considered as a judicial means, I will say only two words. When the English adopted the institution of the jury, they were a half-barbaric people; they have since become one of the most enlightened nations of the globe, and their attachment to the jury has seemed to increase with their enlightenment. They emerged from their territory, and we have seen them spread across the universe. Some formed colonies; others, independent States. The body of the nation kept the king; several of the emigrants founded powerful republics. But everywhere the English equally advocated the institution of

2. *It would be something quite useful and curious to consider the jury as a judicial institution, to appreciate the effects that it produces in the United States and to try to find out in what way the Americans have made use of it. You could find in the examination of this question alone the subject of an entire book and a book interesting for France. You would try to find out there, for example, what portion of American institutions relative to the jury could be introduced among us and with the help of what gradual process. The American state that would provide the most light on this subject would be the state of Louisiana. Louisiana contains a mixed population of French and English. The two sets of law are found there face to face like the two peoples and combine little by little with each other. The most useful books to consult would be the collection of the laws of Louisiana in two volumes, entitled* Digeste des lois de la Louisiane; *and perhaps even more a course-book on civil procedure written in the two languages and entitled:* Traité sur les règles des actions civiles, *printed in 1830 in New Orleans, published by Buisson. This work presents a special advantage; it provides to the French an accurate and authentic explanation of English legal terms. The language of the law forms something like a separate language among all peoples, and among the English more than among any other.*

the jury.[3] They established it everywhere or hastened to reestablish it. A judicial institution that thus obtains the votes of a great people over a long succession of centuries, that is zealously reproduced at all periods of civilization, in all climates and under all forms of government cannot be contrary to the spirit of justice.[4]

[<Justice is one of the first needs of men, and there is no prejudice that can stifle it for long.>]

But let us leave this subject. It would singularly narrow your thought to limit yourself to envisioning the jury as a judicial institution; for, if it exercises a great influence on the outcome of trials, it exercises a very much greater one on the very destinies of society. So the jury is before all else a political institution. You must always judge it from this point of view.

I understand by jury a certain number of citizens taken at random and vested temporarily with the right to judge.

3. *All the English and American jurists are unanimous on this point. Mr. Story, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, in his [very fine] treatise on the federal Constitution returns again to the excellence of the institution of the jury in civil matters:* "The inestimable privilege of a trial by Jury in civil cases [is (ed.)]," *he says,* "a privilege scarcely inferior to that in criminal cases, which is conceded by all persons to be essential to political and civil liberty" *(Story, book III, ch. XXXVIII [p. 654 (ed.)]).*

4. *If you wanted to establish the utility of the jury as judicial institution, you would have many other arguments to offer, and among others the following:*

As you introduce jurors into affairs, you can without inconvenience diminish the number of judges; this is a great advantage. When judges are very numerous, each day death creates a gap in the judicial hierarchy and opens new places for those who survive. So the ambition of the magistrates is continually in suspense and makes them naturally depend on the majority or on the man who appoints to empty posts: then you advance in the courts like you gain rank in the army. It is a state of things entirely contrary to the good administration of justice and to the intentions of the legislator. You want the judges to be irremovable so that they remain free; but what good is it that no one can take their independence away from them if they willingly sacrifice it themselves?

When judges are very numerous, it is impossible not to find many incompetent men among them: for a great magistrate is not an ordinary man. Now, I do not know if a half-enlightened court is not the worst of all combinations in order to attain the ends that are set when establishing the courts of justice.

As for me, I would prefer to abandon the decision in a trial to ignorant jurors led by a skillful magistrate, than to leave it to judges, the majority of whom would have only an incomplete knowledge of jurisprudence and of the laws.

To apply the jury to the suppression of crime appears to me to introduce into the government an eminently republican institution. Let me explain.

The institution of the jury can be aristocratic or democratic, depending on the class from which you take the jurors; but it always retains a [an eminently] republican character, in that it places the real direction of society in the hands of the governed or of a portion of them, and not in the hands of those governing.

Force is never more than a fleeting element of success; soon after force comes the idea of right. A government reduced to being able to reach its enemies only on the field of battle would soon be destroyed. The true sanction of political laws is therefore found in the penal laws and if the sanction is lacking, the law sooner or later loses its force. So the man who judges in a *criminal court* is really the master of society. Now, the institution of the jury puts the people themselves, or at least a class of citizens, on the judge's bench. So the institution of the jury really puts the leadership of society into the hands of the people or of this class.[5]

In England, the jury is recruited from among the aristocratic portion of the nation. The aristocracy makes the laws, applies the laws and judges the infractions of the laws.[B] Everything is in accord: consequently England truly speaking forms an aristocratic republic. In the United States, the same system is applied to the whole people. Each American citizen is a voter and eligible for office and jury.[C] The system of the jury, such as it is understood in America, seems to me as direct and as extreme a consequence of the dogma of sovereignty of the people as universal suffrage. These are two equally powerful means to make the majority rule.

All the sovereigns who have wanted to draw the sources of their power from within themselves and lead society instead of letting themselves be led by society have destroyed the institution of the jury or have enervated

5. *An important remark must be made however:*

The institution of the jury, it is true, gives to the people a general right of control over the actions of the citizens, but it does not provide them with the means to exercise this control in all cases or in an always tyrannical manner.

When an absolute prince has the right to have crimes judged by his appointees, the fate of the accused is so to speak fixed in advance. But were the people resolved to condemn, the composition of the jury and its lack of accountability would still offer some favorable chances to the innocent.

it. The Tudors imprisoned jurors who would not condemn, and Napoleon had jurors chosen by his agents.

[It was the Bourbons who, in the year 1828, really reestablished among us the institution of the jury by making chance the principal arbiter of the choice of jurors. I cannot in this matter prevent myself from admiring the singular connection of events in this world. Bonaparte, who pretended to hold his right from the national will, made a law directly contrary to the sovereignty of the people, and the Bourbons, who said they held their right from themselves, returned the sanction to the hands of the people.[x]

The law of 1828 was, without the knowledge of those who passed it, an immense advance[y] made toward republican institutions in France. You would have noticed it clearly if the Restoration had not rushed headlong into an abyss. The jury thus emancipated would have been sufficient to bind the government little by little to the desires of the middle classes without having had the need to resort to force, because the majority of jurors was always found among the middle classes.]

However evident most of the preceding truths may be, they do not strike all minds, and often, among us, there still seems to be only a confused idea of the institution of the jury. If someone wants to know what elements should make up the list of jurors, the discussion is limited to considering the enlightenment and capacity of those called to be a part of the list, as if it was only a matter of a judicial institution. In truth, that seems to me to be preoccupied with the least portion of the subject. The jury is before all else a political institution; it should be considered as a mode of sovereignty of the people; it must be entirely rejected when you rule out the

x. To the side: "<*In note if included.*

"≠The cause for it is that the first attached more value to absolute power than to the right to exercise it [v: the appearance] while the second still preferred the aspect of the thing to the thing itself≠ {have the right to do everything rather than to use it.}>"

y. Édouard de Tocqueville:

"I would like an *immense step* instead of an *immense advance,* because a *step* may not be an *advance* and it is still very doubtful that it is one in this case. In any case I do not think that you wish to express yourself in this regard or that you should.

"This expression of *advance,* moreover, implies blame for the Bourbons who granted it without knowing, that is to say against their will. While the word *step* cannot include this sense" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 66).

sovereignty of the people, or must be put in harmony with the other laws that establish this sovereignty. The jury forms the part of the nation charged with ensuring the execution of the laws, as the legislative houses are the part of the nation charged with making the laws; and for society to be governed in a fixed and uniform manner, it is necessary that the list of jurors be expanded or restricted with the list of voters. This is the point of view that, in my opinion, must always attract the principal attention of the legislator. The rest is so to speak secondary.

I am so persuaded that the jury is before all else a political institution that I still consider it in this way when it is applied to civil matters. [This can seem extraordinary at first glance. Here are my reasons for doing so.]

Laws are always shaky as long as they do not rely on mores; mores form the only resistant and enduring power among a people.

When the jury is reserved for criminal affairs, the people see it act only from time to time and in particular cases; they get used to doing without the jury in the ordinary course of life, and they consider it as a means and not as the only means for obtaining justice.[6]

When, on the contrary, the jury is extended to civil affairs, its application comes into view at every moment; then it touches all interests; each person comes to contribute to its action; in this way it enters into the customs of life; it bends the human spirit to its forms and merges so to speak with the very idea of justice.

So the institution of the jury, limited to criminal affairs, is always at risk; once introduced into civil matters, it stands up against time and the efforts of men. If you had been able to remove the jury from the mores of the English as easily as from their laws, the jury would have completely succumbed under the Tudors. So it is the civil jury that really saved the liberties of England.

In whatever manner you apply the jury, it cannot fail to exercise a great

6. *This is true for all the more reason when the jury is applied only to certain criminal affairs.*

influence on the national character, but this influence increases infinitely the more you introduce it into civil matters.

The jury, and above all the civil jury, serves to give the mind of all citizens a part of the habits of mind of the judge; and these habits are precisely those that best prepare the people to be free.

It spreads in all classes respect for the thing judged and for the idea of right. Remove these two things, and the love of independence will be nothing but a destructive passion.

It teaches men the practice of equity. Each person, by judging his neighbor, thinks that he can be judged in his turn. That is above all true of the jury in civil matters: there is hardly anyone who fears one day being the object of a criminal proceeding; but everyone can have a civil trial.

The jury teaches each man not to retreat from responsibility for his own actions; a manly disposition, without which there is no political virtue.

It vests each citizen with a sort of magistracy; it makes all feel that they have duties to fulfill toward society and that they enter into its government. By forcing men to get involved in something other than their own affairs, it combats individual egoism, which is like the rust of societies [{that ruins nations more than armies do}].

The jury serves unbelievably to form the judgment and to augment the natural enlightenment of the people. That, in my opinion, is its greatest advantage. You must consider it as a free school, always open, where each juror comes to be instructed about his rights, where he enters into daily communication with the most learned and most enlightened members of the upper classes, where the laws are taught to him in a practical way, and are put within the reach of his intelligence by the efforts of the lawyers, the advice of the judge and the very passions of the parties. I think that the practical intelligence and good political sense of the Americans must be attributed principally to the long use that they have made of the jury in civil matters.

I do not know if the jury is useful to those who have legal proceedings, but I am sure that it is very useful to those who judge them. I regard it as one of the most effective means that a society can use for the education of the people.

What precedes applies to all nations; but here is what is special to the Americans, and in general to democratic peoples.

I said above that in democracies the jurists, and among them the magistrates, form the only aristocratic body that can moderate the movements of the people. This aristocracy is vested with no physical power; it exercises its conservative influence only over minds. Now, it is in the institution of the civil jury that it finds the principal sources of its power.

In criminal trials, where society struggles against a man, the jury is led to see in the judge the passive instrument of the social power, and it distrusts his advice. Moreover, criminal trials rest entirely on simple facts that good sense easily comes to appreciate. On this ground, judge and juror are equal.

It is not the same in civil trials; then the judge appears as a disinterested arbiter between the passions of the parties. The jurors view him with confidence, and they listen to him with respect; for here his intelligence entirely dominates theirs. He is the one who lays out before them the diverse arguments that have fatigued their memory and who takes them by the hand to lead them through the twists and turns of procedure; he is the one who confines them to the point of fact and teaches them the answer that they must give to the question of law. His influence over them is almost without limits.

Is it necessary to say finally why I am so little moved by arguments drawn from the incapacity of jurors in civil matters?

In civil trials, at least whenever it is not a matter of questions of fact, the jury has only the appearance of a judicial body.

The jurors deliver the decision that the judge has rendered. They lend to this decision the authority of the society that they represent and he, the authority of reason and the law.[D]

In England and in America, judges exercise an influence over the fate of criminal trials that the French judge has never known. It is easy to understand the reason for this difference: the English or American magistrate has established his power in civil matters; afterward he is only exercising it in another theater; he is not gaining it there.

There are cases, and they are often the most important ones, where the

American judge has the right to deliver a verdict alone.[7] He then finds himself, by happenstance, in the position where the French judge usually finds himself; but his moral power is very much greater: the memories of the jury still follow him, and his voice has almost as much power as that of the society of which the jurors were the organ.

His influence extends even well beyond the courtroom: in the diversions of private life as in the labors of political life, in the public square as within the legislatures, the American judge constantly finds around him men who are used to seeing in his intelligence something superior to their own; and, after being exercised in trials, his power makes itself felt in all the habits of mind and even on the very souls of those who have participated with him in judging.

So the jury, which seems to diminish the rights of the magistracy, really establishes its dominion, and there is no country where judges are as powerful as those where the people share their privileges.

With the aid of the jury in civil matters, above all, the American magistracy makes what I have called the spirit of the jurist enter into the lowest ranks of society.

Thus the jury, which is the most energetic means to make the people rule, is also the most effective means to teach them to rule.[z]

7. *Federal judges almost always decide alone questions that touch most closely on the government of the country.*

z. Among Beaumont's documents relative to the discussion of the constitutional committee of 1848, the following note is found, which gives an account of an intervention by Tocqueville concerning the jury: "Tocqueville sees a disadvantage in an immediate, absolute and general application of the jury in civil matters. Singular mixture sometimes of fact and law. Necessity of very enlightened public mores. Greater necessity of a more capable jury because of the difficulty of functions. Who says jury says *suppression* in nearly all cases of the double degree of jurisdiction. Great difficulty in leading the jury" (YTC, Beaumont, DIVk).

CHAPTER 9

Of the Principal Causes That Tend to Maintain the Democratic Republic in the United States[a]

The democratic republic[b] survives in the United States. The principal goal of this book has been to make the causes of this phenomenon understood.

The flow of my subject carried me, despite myself, close to several of these causes that I pointed out only from afar in passing. I could not deal with others. And those that I was allowed to expand upon have been left behind as if buried under details.

So I thought that before going further and speaking about the future, I had to gather together in a narrow scope all the reasons that explain the present.

In this type of summary I will be brief, for I will take care to recall only very summarily to the reader what he already knows, and among the facts that I have not yet had the occasion to put forth, I will choose only the principal ones.

I thought that all the causes that tend to maintain the democratic republic[c] in the United States could be reduced to three:[d]

a. At first this chapter was the last in the book; the tenth was added later.

Melvin Richter ("The Uses of Theory: Tocqueville's Adaptation of Montesquieu," in *Essays in Theory and History,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 74–102) compares the method of Tocqueville in this chapter with that followed by Montesquieu in *Esprit des lois.*

b. In the manuscript: "A large democratic republic . . ."

c. The manuscript says: ". . . the large democratic republic . . ."

d. ≠Of the three causes the least influential is that of laws and it is, so to speak, the only one that depends on man. Peoples cannot change their position and the first

The particular and accidental situation in which Providence placed the Americans forms the first;

The second results from laws;

The third follows from habits and mores.

Of the Accidental or Providential Causes That Contribute to Maintaining the Democratic Republic in the United States[e]

The Union does not have neighbors.—No large capital.—The Americans have had the good fortune of birth in their favor.—America is an empty country.—How this circumstance serves powerfully to maintain the democratic republic.—Manner in which the wilderness of America is populated.—Eagerness of the Anglo-Americans to take possession of the empty wilderness areas of the New World.—Influence of material well-being on the political opinions of the Americans.

conditions of their existence. A nation can in the long run modify its habits and its mores, but a generation cannot succeed in doing so. It can only change the laws. [In the margin: But what can the best laws do without circumstances and mores?] Now, of the three causes that we are speaking about, the least influential is precisely that which results from laws. So not only does man not exercise power around himself, but he possesses so to speak none over himself and remains almost completely a stranger to his own fate≠ (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 19).

e. At first this part was entitled: *What Tends {to Moderate the Omnipotence of the Majority in America} to Make the Democratic Republic Practicable in America.* The first sentences of the initial draft show that this part was a continuation of that on the tyranny of the majority: "≠The causes that tend to moderate the omnipotence of the majority in the United States and to make the democratic republic practicable arise from the particular circumstances in which the country is or was, from laws and from mores.≠"

A note in the margin specifies: "≠To put immediately after the omnipotence of the majority what serves more particularly as a counterweight to it and then what in general favors the republic, for the omnipotence of the majority, which is the greatest obstacle to maintaining republics, is not the only one.≠"

There are a thousand circumstances[f] independent of the will of men that make it easy to have the democratic republic in the United States. Some are known, others are easy to make known: I will limit myself to explaining the principal ones.

The Americans do not have neighbors,[g] consequently no great wars, financial crisis, ravages, nor conquest to fear; they need neither heavy taxes nor a numerous army, nor great generals; they have almost nothing to fear from a plague more terrible for republics than all the others put together, military glory.

How to deny the incredible influence that military glory exercises on the spirit of the people? General Jackson, whom the Americans have twice chosen to put at their head, is a man of violent character and middling capacity; nothing in all the course of his career had ever proved that he had the qualities necessary to govern a free people; consequently, the majority of the enlightened classes of the Union have always been opposed to him. So who put him in the President's seat and still keeps him there? The memory of a victory won by him, twenty years ago, under the walls of New Orleans; now, this victory of New Orleans is a very ordinary feat of arms which cannot be of much interest for long except in a country where no battles are fought; and the people who allow themselves to be thus carried away

f. James T. Schleifer *(The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* p. 61) noted that the meaning of the word "circumstances" appreciably narrows from the drafts to the final version and ends by designating only physical circumstances. It can be added, in the same way, that the importance of the influence of climate, as has been seen elsewhere, is manifestly greater in the drafts and manuscript than in the final version.

During his journey, as the correspondence attests, Tocqueville accorded a great importance to climatic conditions: "When you see men who tell you that climate does nothing to the constitution of peoples, assure them that they are mistaken. We saw the French of Canada: they are a tranquil, moral, religious people; in Louisiana we left other French who were restless, dissolute, lax in everything. Between them was 15 degrees of latitude; that is in truth the best reason that I can give for the difference" (Letter to Ernest de Chabrol of 16 January 1832, YTC, BIa2). Also see *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 225–36 and a letter of 1829, before the American journey, in *Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 93–94.

g. For Rousseau, the absence of conflicts with neighbors constitutes one of the conditions for the existence of a good body of laws (*Du contrat social,* book II, chapter X, in *Oeuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, III, p. 389). Jefferson often repeated the same idea.

by the prestige of glory is, certainly, the coldest, most calculating, least military and, if I can put it this way, the most prosaic of all the peoples of the world.[*] h

America has no large capital[1] whose direct or indirect influence is felt over the whole extent of the territory; I consider this one of the first causes for maintaining republican institutions in the United States.j In cities, you can hardly prevent men from consulting each other, from getting worked

[*]. {which has not prevented one of our compatriots who became American forty years ago} ≠During our visit to America a medal was struck in honor of G[ener (ed.)]al. J[ackson (ed.)] having as an inscription: "quod Caesar fecit Jackson superavit," which could have seemed a pleasant jest, but the author did not intend it as a joke. It is true that this unfortunate flatterer was a former French republican, a very ardent enemy of kings and the vices of the royal court [Edmond-Charles Genêt (ed.)].≠

h. This paragraph appears almost literally in a note of 1 November 1831 (pocket notebook 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 186). Tocqueville and Beaumont met Andrew Jackson on 19 January 1832. The evening spent at the White House seems hardly to have impressed the two Frenchmen favorably. Nor did it modify their opinion about the American President. Beaumont gave an account of this visit in a letter to his mother (*Lettres d'Amérique,* pp. 210–11). Also see George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 663–66.

1. *America does not yet have a large capital, but it already has three large cities. In 1830, Philadelphia numbered 161,000 inhabitants, and New York 202,000. The lower classes who inhabit these vast cities form a populace more dangerous than even that of Europe. It is made up first of all of emancipated Negroes, who are condemned by law and opinion to a state of hereditary degradation and misery. Also in its midst is found a multitude of Europeans pushed daily by misfortune and loose behavior to the shores of the New World; these men bring to the United States our worst vices, and they have none of the interests that could combat the influence of those vices. Inhabiting the country without being citizens, they are ready to take advantage of all the passions that agitate the country; consequently we have for some time seen serious riots break out in Philadelphia and New York. Such disorders are unknown in the rest of the country, which is not worried about them, because until now the city population has not exercised any power or any influence on the rural population.*

I regard the large size of certain American cities and above all the nature of their inhabitants, however, as a genuine danger that threatens the future of the democratic republics of the New World, and I am not afraid to predict that it is there that they will perish, unless their government succeeds in creating an armed force that, while remaining subject to the will of the national majority, is nevertheless independent of the people of the cities and can repress their excesses.

j. Compare chapter VIII of book II of *Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (*OC,* II, 1, pp. 139–40), where Tocqueville cites the Marquis de Mirabeau and Montesquieu on the same theme. Later, the great anti-metropolitan will be Rousseau (*Du contrat social,* book III, chapter XIII, *Oeuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, III, p. 427).

up together, from making sudden and impassioned resolutions. Cities form like great assemblies of which all the inhabitants are members. The people exercise a prodigious influence over their magistrates there, and often the people execute their will there without intermediary.

So to subject the provinces to the capital is to put the destiny of the whole empire, not only in the hands of a portion of the people, which is unjust, but also to put it in the hands of the people acting by themselves, which is very dangerous. So the preponderance of capitals strikes a grave blow at the representative system. It makes modern republics succumb to the fault of the ancient republics which all perished from not knowing this system.

It would be easy for me to enumerate here a great number of other secondary causes that have favored the establishment and assure the maintenance of the democratic republics in the United States. But in the middle of this host of fortunate circumstances, I see two principal ones, and I hasten to point them out.

I have already said previously that I saw in the origin of the Americans, in what I called their point of departure, the first and most effective of all the causes to which the present prosperity of the United States could be attributed. The Americans have had the good fortune of birth in their favor: long ago their fathers imported to the land that they inhabit equality of conditions and intellectual equality, from which the democratic republic was bound to emerge one day as if from its natural source. This is still not all; with a republican social state, they passed on to their descendants the habits, ideas and mores most appropriate to make the republic flourish. When I think about what this original fact produced, I seem to see the whole destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who reached its shores, like the whole human race in the first man.

Among the fortunate circumstances that also have favored the establishment and assure the maintenance of the democratic republic in the United States, the first in importance is the choice of the country itself that the Americans inhabit. Their fathers gave them the love of equality and liberty, but it is God who, by giving them an unlimited continent, granted them the means to remain equal and free for a long time.[k]

k. To the side: "≠When a king finds himself troubled by his neighbors, he goes to war; when the people are discontent with their position, they make a revolution.≠"

General well-being favors the stability of all governments, but particularly of democratic government, which rests upon the dispositions of the greatest number, and principally on the dispositions of those who are the most exposed to needs. When the people govern, they must be happy so that they do not overturn the State. Misery produces among them what ambition does among kings. Now, causes that are material and independent of the laws and that can lead to well-being are more numerous in America than they have been in any country in the world, in any period of history. [In Europe the culmination of good laws is to produce well-being; in America all the work of bad laws would scarcely succeed in preventing well-being from being produced.]

In the United States, it is not only legislation that is democratic; nature itself works for the people.

Where to find, in the memory of man, anything resembling what is happening before our eyes in North America?

The famous societies of antiquity were all founded in the midst of enemy peoples who had to be conquered for those societies to be established in their place. Modern peoples have found in several parts of South America vast countries inhabited by peoples who were less enlightened than they, but who had already appropriated the soil by cultivating it. To establish their new States, they had to destroy or subjugate large populations, and they made civilization ashamed of their triumphs.

But North America was inhabited only by wandering tribes who did not think of using the natural riches of the soil. North America was still, properly speaking, a vacant continent, a deserted land, that awaited inhabitants.

Everything is extraordinary among the Americans, their social state as well as their laws; but what is still more extraordinary is the land that holds them.

When the earth was given to men by the Creator, it was young and inexhaustible,[m] but they were weak and ignorant; and when they had learned to take advantage of the treasures that it held in its bosom, they already

m. In the manuscript: "When God created the globe He at once gave part of it over to the efforts of its inhabitants. Providence held the rest in reserve, destined for happier generations.

"The land that thus became the first inheritance of man was young . . ."

covered the face of the land, and soon they had to fight to gain the right to have a refuge and to dwell in liberty.

That is when North America comes into sight, as if God had held it in reserve and it had only just emerged from the waters of the flood.

It presents, as at the first days of creation, rivers whose sources do not run dry, green and moist wildernesses, limitless fields not yet broken by the farmer's plow. In this state, it is no longer offered to the isolated, ignorant and barbaric man of the earliest ages, but to the man already master of the most important secrets of nature, united with his fellows, and educated by an experience of fifty centuries.

At the moment I speak, thirteen million civilized Europeans are spreading tranquilly across fertile wilderness areas whose resources or extent they do not yet exactly know. Three or four thousand soldiers push before them the wandering race of natives; behind the armed men, woodsmen advance who pierce the forests, drive away the wild game, explore the course of rivers and prepare the triumphant march of civilization across the wilderness.

Often, in the course of this work, I have alluded to the material well-being that the Americans enjoy; I have pointed it out as one of the great causes for the success of their laws. This reason had already been given by a thousand others before me: it is the only one that, falling in a way within the awareness of the Europeans, has become popular among us. So I will not expand upon a subject so often treated and so well understood; I will only add several new facts.[n]

It is generally imagined that the wilderness of America is populated with the help of European emigrants who arrive each year on the shores of the New World, while the American population increases and multiplies on the soil that their fathers occupied: that is a great error. The European who reaches the United States arrives there without friends and often without resources; to live, he is forced to hire out his services, and it is rare to see him go beyond the large industrial zone that extends along the ocean. You

n. In the margin: "≠The Americans are so fortunate that everything, even including their *vices,* is useful to them."

cannot clear the wilderness without capital or credit;[*] before risking yourself in the middle of the forest, the body must become accustomed to the rigors of a new climate. So it is the Americans who, daily abandoning the place of their birth, go to create for themselves vast domains far away. Thus the European leaves his cottage to go to inhabit the transatlantic shores, and the American, who is born on these very shores, disappears in turn into the emptiness of the central part of America. This double movement of emigration never stops: it begins in the heart of Europe, it continues across the great ocean, it keeps on across the solitude of the New World. Millions of men march at the same time toward the same point of the horizon: their language, their religion, their mores differ, their goal is shared. They have been told that fortune is found somewhere toward the West, and they go in haste to find it.o [What are they going to do, in what precise place must they stop? They themselves do not know, but they march forward guided by the hand of God.]

Nothing can be compared with this continual displacement of the human species, except perhaps what happened at the fall of the Roman Empire. Then, as today, you saw men rush all in a throng toward the same point and meet turbulently in the same places; but the designs of Providence were different. [Then God wanted to destroy; today He wants to create.] Each new arrival brought in his train destruction and death; today each of them carries with him a seed of prosperity and life.

The distant consequences of this migration of the Americans toward the West is still hidden from us by the future, but the immediate results are easy to recognize: because one part of the former inhabitants moves each year away from the states where they were born, these states, as they grow older, are becoming populated only very slowly; thus in Connecticut, which still numbers only fifty-nine inhabitants per square mile, the population has only grown by a quarter during the past forty years, while in England it has increased by a third during the same period. So the emigrant from Europe always arrives in a country half-full where industry needs hands; he

[*]. A note of explanation and details.

o. Cf. note h for p. 1313 of volume IV.

becomes a worker who is well-off; his son goes to find his fortune in an empty country and becomes a wealthy landowner. The first amasses the capital that the second turns to good account, and there is no poverty either among the foreigners or among the natives.

Legislation, in the United States, favors as much as possible the division of property; but a cause more powerful than legislation prevents property from dividing too much.[2] You can see it clearly in the states that are finally beginning to fill up. Massachusetts is the most populated country in the Union; the inhabitants number eighty per square mile, which is infinitely fewer than in France, where there are one hundred sixty-two gathered in the same space.

In Massachusetts, however, it is quite rare that small estates are divided: the eldest generally takes the land; the younger go to find their fortune in the wilderness.

The law abolished the right of primogeniture; but you can say that Providence reestablished it without anyone having to complain, and this time at least it does not offend justice.

You will judge by a single fact the prodigious number of individuals who leave New England in this way to go to move their homes into the wilderness. We are assured that in 1830, among the members of Congress, there were thirty-six who were born in the small state of Connecticut. So the population of Connecticut, which forms only one forty-third of that of the United States, provides one-eighth of the representatives.p

The state of Connecticut itself, however, sends only five representatives to Congress: the thirty-one others appear there as representatives of the new states of the West. If these thirty-one individuals had remained in Connecticut, it is probable that instead of being rich landowners, they would have remained small farmers and lived in obscurity without being able to open a political career, and that, far from becoming useful legislators, they would have been dangerous citizens

2. *In New England, the land is divided into small estates, but it is no longer being divided.*

p. Tocqueville got this information from Judge Dens of Hartford (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 102).

These considerations do not escape the mind of the Americans any more than ours.

Chancellor Kent writes in his *Commentaries on American Law* (vol. IV, p. 380):

> It cannot be doubted that the division of property will produce great evils when it is carried to the extreme; to the extent that each portion of land can no longer provide for the support of a family; but these disadvantages have never been felt in the United States, and many generations will pass before they are felt. The immense area of our uninhabited territory, the abundance of adjacent lands and the continual flow of emigration that, departing from the shores of the Atlantic, goes constantly into the interior of the country, are sufficient and will be sufficient to prevent the breaking up of inherited lands for a long time yet to come.

It would be difficult to portray the greediness with which the American throws himself on this immense prize that fortune offers him. To pursue it he fearlessly defies the Indian's arrow and the diseases of the wilderness; the silence of the woods holds nothing that astonishes him, the approach of ferocious beasts does not rouse him; a stronger passion than love of life constantly spurs him on. Before him extends a continent nearly without limits, and you would say that, already afraid of having no room there, he hurries for fear of arriving too late. I spoke about the emigration from the old states, but what will I say about that from the new? Not fifty years ago Ohio was founded; most of its inhabitants were not born there; its capital has not existed thirty years, and an immense expanse of uninhabited country still covers its territory; the population of Ohio, however, has already started to march again toward the West; most of those who come into the fertile prairies of Illinois are inhabitants of Ohio. These men have left their first home to be comfortable; they leave the second to be still better off: nearly everywhere, they find fortune, but not happiness. Among them, the desire for well-being has become a restless and ardent passion that grows as it is being satisfied. Formerly they broke the ties that bound them to their birthplace; they have formed no other ties since. For them, emigration began as a need; today, it has become in their eyes a kind of game of chance, which they love for the emotions as much as for the gain.

Sometimes man moves so quickly that the wilderness reappears behind him. The forest has only bent under his feet; the moment he passes, it rises up again. It is not unusual, while traveling through the new states of the West, to encounter abandoned dwellings in the middle of the woods; often you find the ruins of a cabin in the deepest solitude, and you are amazed while crossing rough-hewn clearings that attest simultaneously to human power and inconstancy. Among these abandoned fields, over these day old ruins, the ancient forest does not delay growing new shoots; the animals retake possession of their realm; nature comes happily to cover the vestiges of man with green branches and flowers and hastens to make the ephemeral trace of man disappear.

I remember that while crossing[q] one of the uninhabited districts that still cover the state of New York, I reached the shores of a lake entirely surrounded by forests as at the beginning of the world. A small island arose in the middle of the water. The woods that covered it, spreading their foliage, entirely hid its banks. On the shores of the lake, nothing announced the presence of man; you noticed only a column of smoke on the horizon that, going straight up into the clouds above the top of the trees, seemed to hang from rather than rise into the sky.

An Indian canoe was pulled onto the sand. I took advantage of it to go to visit the island that had first attracted my attention and soon after I reached its shore. The entire island formed one of those delightful uninhabited places of the New World that almost make civilized men feel nostalgia for savage life. A vigorous vegetation proclaimed by its wonders the incomparable fertility of the soil. As in all the wildernesses of North America, a profound silence reigned that was interrupted only by the monotonous cooing of the woodpigeons or by the blows that the woodpecker struck on the bark of the trees. I was very far from believing that this place had formerly been inhabited, nature there seemed so left to itself; but upon reaching the center of the island, I suddenly thought that I had found vestiges of man. Then I carefully examined all the objects in the area, and soon

q. The manuscript adds "by chance." It is not at all by chance that Tocqueville found himself in this sparsely inhabited region of the state of New York. He was there expressly to visit the island that he describes here (see appendix I, *Voyage to Lake Oneida*).

I no longer doubted that a European had come to find a refuge in this place. But how his work had changed appearance! The woods that, long ago, he had hastily cut down to make himself a shelter had since grown shoots; his fence had become living hedges, and his cabin had been transformed into a grove. In the middle of these bushes you still saw a few stones blackened by fire, scattered around a small pile of ashes; undoubtedly this was the place of the hearth: the chimney, collapsing, had covered it with debris. For some time I admired in silence the resources of nature and the weakness of man; and when finally I had to leave these enchanted places, I again repeated with sadness: What! Ruins already![r]

In Europe we are used to regarding as a great social danger restlessness of spirit, immoderate desire for wealth, extreme love of independence. These are precisely all the things that guarantee a long and peaceful future to the American republic. Without these restless passions, the population would concentrate around certain places and, as among us, would soon experience needs difficult to satisfy. How fortunate a country is the New World, where the vices of man are nearly as useful to society as his virtues!

This exercises a great influence on the way in which human actions are judged in the two hemispheres. Often the Americans call praiseworthy industry what we name love of gain, and they see a certain cowardice of heart in what we consider moderation of desires.

In France, simplicity of tastes, tranquillity of mores, spirit of family and love of birthplace are regarded as great guarantees of tranquillity and happiness for the State; but in America, nothing seems more prejudicial to society than such virtues. The French of Canada, who have faithfully preserved the traditions of the old mores, already find it difficult to live in their territory, and this small group of people just born will soon be prey to the miseries of old nations. In Canada, the men who have the most enlightenment, patriotism and humanity, make extraordinary efforts to give the

r. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I believe that in this place Alexis should add a note that would say a few words about the story of the emigrant" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 57).

people a distaste for the simple happiness that is still enough for them. These men celebrate the advantages of wealth, just as among us they would perhaps praise the charms of honest mediocrity, and they take more care to incite human passions than is taken elsewhere to calm such passions. Nothing in their eyes merits more praises than to exchange the pure and tranquil pleasures presented by the native country to the poor man for the sterile enjoyments provided by well-being under a foreign sky; to flee the paternal hearth and the fields where his ancestors rest; to abandon the living and the dead in order to run after fortune.

In our time, America offers men resources always greater than the industry that develops those resources can be.

So in America, you cannot provide enough enlightenment; for all enlightenment, at the same time that it can be useful to whoever possesses it, still turns to the profit of those who do not. New needs are not to be feared there, because all needs are satisfied without difficulty. You do not have to fear giving birth to too many passions, because all passions find an easy and salutary means of satisfaction. You cannot make men too free, because they are almost never tempted to make bad use of liberty.

The American republics of today are like companies of merchants formed to exploit in common the uninhabited lands of the New World and occupied with a prospering commerce.

The passions that most profoundly agitate the Americans are commercial passions and not political passions, or rather they carry into politics the habits of business. They love order, without which business cannot prosper, and they particularly prize regularity of mores, which lays the foundation of good business establishments; they prefer good sense, which creates great fortunes, to genius, which often dissipates them; general ideas frighten their minds, accustomed to positive calculations, and among the Americans, practice is more honored than theory.

You must go to America to understand what power material well-being[s] exercises over political actions and even over opinions themselves, which should be subject only to reason. It is among foreigners that you principally

s. See chapter X of the second part of the third volume.

discover the truth of this. Most of the emigrants from Europe bring to the New World the wild love of independence and change that is so often born out of the midst of our miseries. I sometimes met in the United States some of those Europeans who formerly had been forced to flee their country because of their political opinions. All astonished me by their speeches; but I was struck by one of them more than any other. As I crossed one of the most distant districts of Pennsylvania, night surprised me, and I went to ask for shelter at the door of a wealthy planter: he was a Frenchman. He made me sit down beside his hearth, and we began to talk freely, as happens to men who find themselves in the depths of the forest two thousand leagues from the country where they were born. I was not unaware that forty years ago my host had been a great leveler and an ardent demagogue. His name was known to history.[t]

So I was strangely surprised to hear him discuss the right of property as an economist, I was almost going to say a landholder, would be able to do; he spoke of the necessary hierarchy that fortune establishes among men, of obedience to established law, of the influence of good mores in republics, of the aid that religious ideas lend to order and to liberty: he even cited as if by accident, in support of one of his political opinions, the authority of Jesus Christ.

While listening to him, I wondered at the weakness of human reason. Something is either true or false; how to find out amid the uncertainties of knowledge and the diverse lessons of experience? A new fact arises that relieves all my doubts. I was poor, now I am rich; if at least well-being, while acting upon my conduct, left my judgment free! But no, my opinions have indeed changed with my fortune, and in the happy outcome from which I profit, I have really discovered the decisive reason that I had lacked until then.

Well-being exercises an influence still more freely over the Americans than over foreigners. The American has always seen before his eyes order and public prosperity linked together and marching in step, he does not imagine that they can live separately; so he has nothing to forget, and, unlike

t. This person has not been identified.

so many Europeans, does not need to lose what he retains from his first education.

[Political society, however, is constantly agitated in the United States. But the movement is slow and measured. It influences the details and not the whole of public fortune. It bears more upon men than upon principles. You want to improve constantly, but are afraid of upsetting things; and while desiring the best, you are even more afraid of the worst.

What could I add to succeed in making my thought understood? What occurred to so many of the French republicans under the Empire and to some of the liberals of today happens to the *majority* of men in America. They find in the end that society does well, or nearly so, because they are doing well.]

Of the Influence of Laws on Maintaining the Democratic Republic in the United States

Three principal causes for maintaining the democratic republic.—Federal form.—Town institutions.—Judicial power.

[≠The second general cause that I pointed out as serving to maintain the political institutions of the Americans is found in the very goodness of these institutions, that is to say in their conformity to the social state and physical position.≠]

The principal goal of this book was to make the laws of the United States known; if this goal has been reached, the reader has already been able to judge for himself which ones, among these laws, tend really to maintain the democratic republic and which ones put it in danger. If I have not succeeded in the whole course of this book, I will succeed even less in this chapter.

So I do not want to pursue the course that I have already covered, and a few lines must suffice for me to summarize.

Three causes seem to contribute more than all the others to maintaining the democratic republic in the New World:

The first is the federal form that the Americans adopted, and that allows

the Union to enjoy the power of a large republic and the security of a small one.

I find the second in the town institutions that, by moderating[u] the despotism of the majority, give the people at the same time the taste for liberty and the art of being free.

The third is found in the constitution of the judicial power. I have shown how much the courts serve to correct the errors of democracy and how, without ever being able to stop the movements of the majority, they succeed in slowing and directing them.

Of the Influence of Mores on Maintaining the Democratic Republic in the United States

I said above that I considered the mores as one of the great general causes to which maintaining the democratic republic in the United States can be attributed.

I understand the expression *mores* here in the sense that the ancients attached to the word *mores;* I apply it not only to mores strictly speaking, which could be called habits of the heart, but to the different notions that men possess, to the diverse opinions that are current among them, and to the ensemble of ideas from which the habits of the mind are formed.[v]

So by this word I understand the whole moral and intellectual state of

u. The manuscript says "by preventing."

v. "I understand by *mores* the whole of the dispositions that man brings to the government of society. Mores strictly speaking, enlightenment, habits, knowledge . . ." (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 58).

Melvin Richter ("The Uses of Theory: Tocqueville's Adaptation of Montesquieu," in *Essays in Theory and History,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970, pp. 90–91) remarks that Tocqueville, by the term *mores,* designates all that Montesquieu understood by *general spirit:* precedents, mores, habits, economy, style of thought, etc.—with the exception of laws, which he considers apart. But the explanation, which ascribes such a meaning to Tocqueville's bad memory and imprecision of method, is difficult to accept. The distinction between laws and mores seems more understandable if you refer to Rousseau, who defines and understands mores in a fashion quite similar to that of Tocqueville. On this point as on others, Tocqueville read Montesquieu through Rousseau. See *Du contrat social,* book II, chapter XII, *Œuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, III, pp. 393–94.

a people. My goal is not to draw a picture of American mores; I limit myself at this moment to trying to find out what among them is favorable for maintaining the political institutions.

Of Religion Considered as a Political Institution, How It Serves Powerfully to Maintain the Democratic Republic among the Americans[*]

North America populated by men who professed a democratic and republican Christianity.—Arrival of Catholics.—Why today Catholics form the most democratic and the most republican class.

Alongside each religion is found a political opinion that is joined to it by affinity.[w]

Allow the human spirit to follow its tendency, and it will regulate in a uniform way political society and the holy city; it will seek, if I dare say so, to *harmonize* earth with heaven.[x]

Most of English America was populated by men who, after escaping from the authority of the Pope, submitted to no religious supremacy; so they brought to the New World a Christianity that I cannot portray better than by calling it democratic and republican: this will singularly favor the establishment of the republic and of democracy in public affairs. From the onset, politics and religion found themselves in accord, and they have not ceased to be so since.

[*]. ≠I will examine in the second volume the state of religion in the United States, the sects, the religious mores. Here I am considering it only from the political point of view.≠

w. "Who could deny the fortunate influence of religion on mores and the influence of mores on the government of society?/

"The people see in religion the safeguard and the divine origin of liberty; the rich, the guarantee of their fortune and their life; the statesmen, the safeguard of society; the pioneer, something like his companion in the wilderness" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 57).

x. In the margin in the first version: "≠Despotism can do without religion, but not liberty.

"Unanimity of statesmen on the utility of religion.≠"

About fifty years ago Ireland began to pour a Catholic population into the United States. For its part, American Catholicism made converts.[y] Today in the Union you find more than a million Christians who profess the truths of the Roman Church.

These Catholics show a great fidelity to the observances of their religion, and are full of ardor and zeal for their beliefs; however, they form the most republican and most democratic class that exists in the United States. This fact is a surprise at first glance, but reflection easily discloses the hidden causes.

[Christianity, even when it demands passive obedience in matters of dogma, is still of all religious doctrines the one most favorable to liberty, because it appeals only to the mind and heart of those whom it wants to bring into subjection.[z] No religion has so disdained the use of physical force as the religion of J[esus (ed.)]. C[hrist (ed.)]. Now, wherever physical force is not honored, tyranny cannot endure. Therefore you see that despotism has never been able to be established among Christians.[a] It has always lived there from day to day and in a state of alarm. When we say that a Christian nation is enslaved, it is in comparison to a Christian people that we judge. If we compare it to an infidel people, the Christian nation would seem free to us.

y. In the manuscript: "American Catholicism spread for its part by numerous conversions."

z. In a first version of the drafts, this sentence is also found: ". . . wants to bring into subjection. If it loves to rule despotically over the will of man, it is after the will has by itself bent to its yoke. No religion . . ." (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 49).

a. Hervé de Tocqueville:

Édouard's advice is to delete this piece up to the words *among the different Christian doctrines.*

I share his opinion concerning only the first paragraph. It is not useful and besides many claims can be challenged. The author says: *no religion has so disdained the use of physical force as much as the religion of Jesus Christ.* Someone will put forward the Albigensians, the Inquisition, the massacre of the Cévennes, etc. Later *despotism has never been able to be established among Christians* is found. Someone will reply by citing Spain since Philip II.

The paragraph on equality, which goes straight to the point and serves as a transition, must be kept here (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 50–51).

I will say something analogous concerning equality.

Of all religious doctrines, Christianity, whatever interpretation you give it, is also the one most favorable to equality. Only the religion of J[esus (ed.)]. C[hrist (ed.)]. has placed the sole grandeur of man in the accomplishment of duties, where each person can attain it; and has been pleased to consecrate poverty and hardship, as something nearly divine.

I will add that among the different Christian doctrines, Catholicism seems to me one of the least contrary to the leveling of conditions.]

I think that it is wrong to regard the Catholic religion as a natural enemy of democracy. Among the different Christian doctrines, Catholicism seems to me on the contrary one of the most favorable to equality of conditions. Among Catholics, religious society is composed of only two elements: priest and people. The priest alone rises above the faithful; everything is equal below him.[b]

In matters of dogma, Catholicism places all minds on the same level; it subjects to the details of the same beliefs the learned as well as the ignorant, the man of genius as well as the common man; it imposes the same observances on the rich as on the poor, inflicts the same austerities on the powerful as on the weak; it compromises with no mortal, and by applying the same measure to each human being, it loves to mix all classes of society together at the foot of the same altar, as they are mixed together in the eyes of God.

So, if Catholicism disposes the faithful to obedience, it does not prepare them for inequality. I will say the opposite about Protestantism,[c] which, in general, carries men much less toward equality than toward independence.[d]

b. In the margin: "≠Catholicism favors the spirit of equality in the manner of absolute power. It places one man beyond all rank and leaves all the others mingled together in the crowd.≠"

c. "Protestantism is the government of the middle classes applied to the religious world" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 85).

d. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I would delete this sentence for three reasons: 1. It implies a sort of contradiction with the beginning of the chapter where the author attributes to Protestantism the calm and regular establishment of democracy. 2. The thought is little developed. 3. The sentence is not useful here" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 51–52).

Catholicism is like an absolute monarchy. Remove the prince, and conditions there are more equal than in republics.[e]

The Catholic priest has often come out of the sanctuary to enter into society as a power, and he has come to take a seat amid the social hierarchy; sometimes he then used his religious influence to assure the lasting existence of a political order of which he is part. Then you could see Catholics as partisans of aristocracy by spirit of religion.

But once priests are excluded or withdraw from government, as they are in the United States, there are no men who, by their beliefs, are more disposed than Catholics to carry the idea of equality of conditions into the political world.

So if Catholics in the United States are not strongly led by the nature of their beliefs toward democratic and republican opinions, at least they are not naturally against them, and their social position, as well as their small number, makes it a rule for them to embrace those opinions.[f]

Most Catholics are poor, and they need all citizens to govern in order to reach the government themselves. Catholics are in the minority, and they need all rights to be respected in order to be assured of the free exercise of theirs. These two causes push them, even without their knowledge, toward

e. ≠I do not doubt that Protestantism, which places all religious authority in the universality of the faithful acting by themselves, is very favorable to the establishment of [v: indirectly supports the political dogma of the sovereignty of the people and thus serves] republican government. And Catholicism, subject to the intellectual authority of the Pope and Councils, seems to me to have more natural affinity with limited monarchy than with any other government≠ (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 71).

f. Hervé de Tocqueville:

This paragraph is badly written. I would put it this way: *If, moreover, Catholics in the United States were not led by the nature of their belief toward democratic and republican opinions, their social position as well as their small number would make it a rule for them to embrace those opinions.* Delete all the rest. This turn of phrase seems to me to present ideas in a more logical way and to serve as a natural transition to the true reason why Catholics in the United States love the republic. For at bottom you cannot close your eyes to the fact that the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Catholics is much more an image of monarchical government than of republican institutions. Not a word of the prayer must be omitted (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 52–53).

political doctrines that they would perhaps adopt with less ardor if they were rich and predominant.

The Catholic clergy in the United States have not tried to struggle against this political tendency; they seek instead to justify it. Catholic priests in America have divided the intellectual world into two parts: in one, they left revealed dogmas, and there they submit without discussion; in the other, they put political truth, and there they think that God abandoned political truth to the free search of men. Thus, Catholics in the United States are simultaneously the most submissive faithful and the most independent citizens [that there are in the world].

So you can say that in the United States not a single religious doctrine shows itself hostile to democratic and republican institutions. All the clergy there use the same language; [≠and while American publicists make all the miseries of society flow from despotism and inequality of conditions, priests represent despotism and inequality of conditions as the most fertile sources of moral evil≠] opinions there are in agreement with laws, and only one current so to speak rules the human mind.

I was living for a short while in one of the largest cities of the Union when I was invited to attend a political meeting the goal of which was to come to the aid of the Poles, and to send them arms and money.

I found two or three thousand persons gathered in a vast room that had been prepared to receive them. Soon after, a priest, dressed in his ecclesiastical robes, came forward to the edge of the platform intended for the speakers. Those attending, after removing their hats, stood in silence, and he spoke in these terms:

> God all-powerful! God of armies! Thou who sustained the hearts and guided the arms of our fathers when they upheld the sacred rights of their national independence; Thou who made them triumph over an odious oppression, and who granted to our people the benefits of peace and liberty; oh Lord! turn a favorable eye toward the other hemisphere; look with pity upon a heroic people who today struggle as we once did and for the defense of the same rights! Lord, who created all men on the same model, do not allow despotism to come to distort Thy work and to maintain inequality on earth. God all-powerful! watch over the destiny of the Poles, make them worthy to be free; may Thy wisdom rule in their councils, may

Thy strength be in their arms; spread terror among their enemies, divide the powers that plot their ruin, and do not allow the injustice that the world witnessed fifty years ago to be consummated today. Lord, who holds in Thy powerful hand the hearts of peoples as well as those of men, raise up allies for the sacred cause of right; make the French nation arise finally and, emerging from the sleep in which its leaders hold it, come to fight once again for the liberty of the world.

O Lord! never turn Thy face from us; allow us always to be the most religious people, as well as the most free.

God all-powerful, grant our prayer today; save the Poles. We ask Thee in the name of Thy beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for the salvation of all men. *Amen.*

The entire assembly repeated *Amen* with reverence.

Indirect Influence Exercised by Religious Beliefs on Political Society in the United States

Morality of Christianity which is found in all sects.—Influence of religion on the mores of Americans.—Respect for the marriage bond.—How religion encloses the imagination of the Americans within certain limits and moderates among them the passion to innovate.—Opinion of Americans on the political utility of religion.—Their efforts to extend and assure its dominion.

I have just shown what the direct action of religion on politics was in the United States. Its indirect action seems even more powerful to me, and it is when religion is not speaking about liberty that it best teaches the Americans the art of being free.[g]

There is an innumerable multitude of sects in the United States. All differ in the worship that must be given to the Creator, but all agree on the

g. To the side: "≠Patriotic affection of the Americans for religion.

"I am not sure that the Americans are convinced of the truth of religion, but I am sure that they are convinced of its utility.≠"

duties of men toward one another. So each sect worships God in its way, but all sects preach the same morality in the name of God. If it is very useful to a man as an individual that his religion be true, it is not the same for society. Society has nothing either to fear or to hope concerning the other life; and what is most important for society is not so much that all citizens profess the true religion but that they profess a religion. All the sects in the United States are, moreover, within the great Christian unity, and the morality of Christianity is the same everywhere. [{In America there are Catholics and Protestants, but Americans profess the Christian religion.}]

You are free to think that a certain number of Americans, in the worship they give to God, follow their habits more than their convictions. In the United States, moreover, the sovereign is religious, and consequently hypocrisy must be common; but America is still the place in the world where the Christian religion has most retained true power over souls; and nothing shows better how useful and natural religion is to man, since the country where today it exercises the most dominion is at the same time the most enlightened and most free.

I said that American priests come down in a general way in favor of civil liberty, without excepting even those who do not allow religious liberty; you do not see them lend their support, however, to any political system in particular. They take care to keep out of public affairs and do not get mixed up in the schemes of the parties. So you cannot say that in the United States religion exercises an influence on laws or on the detail of political opinions, but it directs mores, and it is by regulating the family that it works to regulate the State.

I do not doubt for an instant that the great severity of mores that is noticed in the United States has its primary source in beliefs. Religion there is often powerless to restrain the man amid the innumerable temptations presented by fortune. It cannot moderate in him the ardor to grow rich that comes to goad everyone, but it rules with sovereign power over the soul of the woman, and it is the woman who shapes the mores.[h] America is assuredly the country in the world in which the marriage bond is most respected,

h. See chapter IX of the third part of the fourth volume.

and in which the highest and most sound idea of conjugal happiness has been conceived.

In Europe, nearly all of the disorders of society are born around the domestic hearth and not far from the marital bed. That is where men conceive scorn for natural bonds and permitted pleasures, taste for disorder, restlessness of heart, instability of desires. Agitated by the tumultuous passions that have often troubled his own dwelling, the European submits only with difficulty to the legislative powers of the State. When, coming from the agitation of the political world, the American returns to the bosom of his family, he immediately encounters the image of order and peace. There, all his pleasures are simple and natural, his joys innocent and tranquil; and as he achieves happiness by the regularity of life, he easily gets used to regulating his opinions as well as his tastes.[j]

While the European seeks to escape his domestic sorrows by troubling society, the American draws from his home the love of order that he then carries into the affairs of the State.

In the United States, religion regulates not only mores; it extends its dominion even to the mind.

Among the Anglo-Americans, some profess Christian dogmas because they believe them; others, because they fear not appearing to believe them. So Christianity rules without obstacles, with the consent of all; as a result, as I have already said elsewhere, everything is certain and fixed in the moral world, while the political world seems abandoned to discussion and to the experiments of men. Thus the human mind never sees a limitless field before it; whatever its audacity, it feels from time to time that it must stop before insurmountable barriers. Before innovating, it is forced to accept certain primary givens, and to subject its boldest conceptions to certain forms that retard and stop it.

So the imagination of the Americans, in its greatest departures, has only a circumspect and uncertain movement; its ways are hampered and its

j. Basil Hall finds that Tocqueville exaggerated the domestic happiness of Americans (cf. the letter of Tocqueville to Basil Hall reproduced in note d for pp. 819–21 of the third volume).

works incomplete. These habits of restraint are found in political society and singularly favor the tranquillity of the people, as well as the continued existence of the institutions that the people have given themselves. Nature and circumstances had made out of the inhabitant of the United States an audacious man; it is easy to judge so when you see how he pursues fortune. If the mind of the Americans were free of all hindrances, you would soon find among them the boldest innovators and the most implacable logicians in the world. But the revolutionaries of America are obliged to profess publicly a certain respect for Christian morality and equity that does not allow them to violate laws easily when the laws are opposed to the execution of their designs; and if they could rise above their scruples, they would still feel checked by the scruples of their partisans. Until now no one has been found in the United States who has dared to advance this maxim: that everything is allowed in the interest of society. Impious maxim, that seems to have been invented in a century of liberty in order to legitimate all the tyrants to come. [<In France a [illegible word] {man} seeks to justify this enormity by principles and facts, and he goes to take a seat in the councils of the prince.>]

Therefore, at the same time that the law allows the American people to do everything, religion prevents them from conceiving of everything and forbids them to dare everything.[k]

So religion, which among the Americans never directly takes part in the government of society, must be considered as the first of their political institutions; for if it does not give them the taste for liberty, it singularly facilitates their use of it.

It is also from this point of view that the inhabitants of the United States themselves consider religious beliefs. I do not know if all Americans have faith in their religion, for who can read the recesses of the heart? But I am sure that they believe it necessary for maintaining republican institutions. This opinion does not belong to one class of citizens or to one party, but to the whole nation; you find it among all ranks.

In the United States, when a politician attacks a sect, it is not a reason

k. In the margin: "≠American liberty was born in the bosom of religion and is still sustained in its arms.≠"

for even the partisans of that sect not to support him; but if he attacks all sects together, each one flees from him, and he remains alone.

While I was in America, a witness appeared before the assizes of the county of Chester (State of New York) and declared that he did not believe in the existence of God and in the immortality of the soul. The presiding judge refused to admit his oath, given, he said, that the witness had destroyed in advance any faith that could be given to his words.[3] The newspapers reported the fact without comment.

Americans mix Christianity and liberty so completely in their mind that it is nearly impossible to make them conceive one without the other; and, among them, this is not one of those sterile beliefs that the past bequeaths to the present and that seem more to vegetate deep in the soul than to live.

I have seen Americans join together to send priests into the new states of the West and to found schools and churches there; they are afraid that religion may come to be lost in the middle of the woods, and that the people who are arising there may not be as free as those from whom they came. I met rich inhabitants of New England who abandoned the country of their birth with the goal of going to lay the foundations of Christianity and liberty on the banks of the Missouri or on the prairies of Illinois. This is how religious zeal in the United States constantly warms up at the hearth of patriotism. You think that these men act uniquely in consideration of the other life, but you are mistaken: eternity is only one of their concerns. If you question these missionaries of Christian civilization, you will be very surprised to hear them speak so often about the good things of this world and to find politicians where you thought to see only men of religion. "All the American republics stand together one with the others, they will say to you; if the republics of the West fell into anarchy or submitted to the yoke

3. *Here are the words in which the* New York Spectator *of 23 August 1831 reports the fact:*

> *The court of common pleas of Chester county (New York) a few days since rejected a witness who declared his disbelief in the existence of God. The presiding judge remarked that he had not before been aware that there was a man living who did not believe in the existence of God; that this belief constituted the sanction of all testimony in a court of justice and that he knew of no cause in a Christian country where a witness had been permitted to testify without such a belief.*

of despotism, the republican institutions that flourish on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean would be in great peril; so we have an interest that these new states are religious, in order that they allow us to remain free."[m]

Such are the opinions of the Americans; but their error is clear. For each day someone proves to me very learnedly that everything is good in America, except precisely this religious spirit that I admire; and I learn that the only thing missing from the liberty and happiness of the human species, on the other side of the Ocean, is to believe with Spinoza[n] in the eternity of the world, and to uphold with Cabanis that the brain secretes thought. To that I have nothing to reply, in truth, if not that those who use this language have not been to America, and have not seen religious peoples any more than free peoples. So I will await their return.

[≠For me, if something could make me despair of the destiny of Europe, it is to see the strange confusion that reigns there in minds. I see pious men who would like to suffocate liberty, as if liberty, this great privilege of man, was not a nearly holy thing. Further along, I see others who think to arrive at being free by attacking all beliefs, but I do not see any who seem to notice the tight and necessary knot that ties [v: the republic] religion to liberty.≠]

There are men in France who consider republican institutions as the temporary instrument of their grandeur. They measure with their eyes the immense gap that separates their vices and their miseries from power and riches, and they would like to pile up ruins[o] in this abyss in order to try to fill it. These men are to liberty what the free companies of the Middle Ages were to kings; they make war on their own behalf even when they wear his colors; the republic will always live long enough to pull them out of their present low position. I am not speaking to them. But there are others who

m. In the margin: "≠We would not give ourselves all these difficulties if a regulating force existed outside of society. But how to govern yourself [v: an entire people] without the existence [v: support] of beliefs and mores?≠"

n. In place of Spinoza, the manuscript cites Voltaire.

o. In the manuscript: ". . . ruins and riches and they would like to throw the republic down like a narrow passageway and flying bridge over the abyss."

see in the republic a permanent and tranquil state, a necessary end toward which ideas and mores lead modern societies each day, and who would sincerely like to prepare men to be free. When these men attack religious beliefs, they follow their passions and not their interests. Despotism can do without faith, but not liberty. Religion is much more necessary in the republic that they advocate than in the monarchy that they attack, and in democratic republics more than in all others. How could society fail to perish if, while the political bond grows loose, the moral bond does not become tighter? And what to do with a people master of itself, if it is not subject to God?

Of the Principal Causes That Make Religion Powerful in America[p]

Care that the Americans have taken to separate Church and State.—Laws, public opinion, the efforts of priests themselves, work toward this result.—To this cause must be attributed the power that religion exercises on souls in the United States.—Why.—What is today the natural state of man in

p. In an initial plan of the work:

Religious society./
Nomenclature of the various sects.—From Catholicism to the sect that is furthest from it.
Quakers, Methodists.—Point out what is antisocial in the doctrine of Quakers, Unitarians.
Relations among the sects.
Freedom of worship.—Toleration: in the legal respect; with respect to mores.
Catholicism.
Place of religion in the political order and its degree of influence on American society (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 26–27).

Several ideas of this part are roughed out in a letter from Tocqueville to Chabrol dated 26 October 1831. Tocqueville answers certain questions that Louis Bouchitté had asked him concerning religion in the United States (YTC, BIa2).

This passage is not without many similarities to "Note on the religious movement in the United States" by Gustave de Beaumont, very particularly to part III, "Relations of religions with the State" (*Marie,* II, pp. 213–25).

the matter of religion.—What particular and accidental cause, in certain countries, works against men conforming to this state.

The philosophers of the XVIIIth century explained the gradual weakening of beliefs in a very simple way. Religious zeal, they said, must fade as liberty and enlightenment increase. It is unfortunate that facts do not agree with this theory.[q]

There is such a European population whose disbelief is equaled only by its brutishness and ignorance, while in America you see one of the most free and most enlightened[r] peoples in the world fulfill with ardor all the external duties of religion.

When I arrived in the United States, it was the religious aspect of the country that first struck my eyes.[s] As I prolonged my journey, I noticed the great political consequences that flowed from these new facts.

I had seen among us the spirit of religion and the spirit of liberty march almost always in opposite directions. Here, I found them intimately joined the one to the other: they reigned together over the same soil.

Each day I felt my desire to know the cause of this phenomenon increase.

To find it out, I asked the faithful of all communions; I sought, above all, the company of priests who are the keepers of the different faiths and who have a personal interest in their continued existence. The religion I

q. I have heard it said in Europe that it was very unfortunate that these poor Americans had religion. When you have been in the United States, conviction that religion is more useful in republics than in monarchies, and in democratic republics more than anywhere else. Disastrous misunderstanding in France. Despotic powers of Europe favor religion./

As for these cut-throats, liberty is the greatest gift of God, it is the republicans, I have nothing to say to them . . . but the others . . . may they know that liberty is an almost *holy* thing [v: what distinguishes us from beasts] (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 57).

r. The manuscript says: ". . . you see the most free and most enlightened . . ." Hervé de Tocqueville: "Isn't the expression a bit exaggerated?" (YTC, CIIIb, 1 p. 44).

s. Several times Tocqueville uses the same expression in the book while referring to other aspects that attracted his attention, for example, the activity that reigns in the United States.

profess brought me particularly close to the Catholic clergy, and I did not delay in striking up a sort of intimacy with several of its members.[t] To each of them I expressed my astonishment and revealed my doubts. I found that all of these men differed among themselves only on the details; but all attributed the peaceful dominion that religion exercises in their country principally to the complete separation of Church and State. I am not afraid to assert that, during my visit in America, I did not meet a single man, priest or laymen, who did not agree on this point.

This led me to examine more attentively than I had done until then the position that American priests occupy in political society. I realized with

t. Few questions have provoked more commentary than the religious beliefs of Tocqueville. All commentators nonetheless take as true the confession of faith made to Madame Swetchine in the famous letter of 26 February 1857 (*Correspondance avec Madame Swetchine,OC,* XV, 2, p. 315). There Tocqueville says that he lost his faith when he was sixteen years old, after reading several passages chosen haphazardly from his father's library. His works and his correspondence allow us, however, to guess his assent to several great dogmas of Catholicism. As Luis Díez de Corral (*La mentalidad política de Tocqueville con especial referencia a Pascal,* Madrid: Real Academia de Ciencias Morales y Políticas, 1965, p. 118) notes, Tocqueville is closer to those who, in the words of Pascal, "seek while groaning," eternally plagued by doubt and uncertainty, captives to the "wager." In this regard, the author writes to Francisque de Corcelle:

> If you know a recipe for belief, for God ! give it to me. But what power does the will have over the free processes of the mind? If will alone were sufficient for belief, I would have been devout a long time ago; or rather I would always have been devout, for doubt has always seemed to me the most unbearable of the ills of the world; I have constantly judged it to be worse than death and inferior only to illnesses (*Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 2, p. 29).

A little further in this chapter, Tocqueville explains what perhaps best corresponds to his own sentiment in the matter of religious beliefs. The latter, he says, are abandoned

> by coldness rather than by hatred; you do not reject them, they leave you. While ceasing to believe religion true, the unbeliever continues to judge it useful. Considering religious beliefs from a human aspect, he recognizes their dominion over mores, their influence over laws. He understands how they can make men live in peace and gently prepare men for death. So he regrets faith after losing it, and deprived of a good of which he knows the whole value, he is afraid to take it away from those who still possess it (p. 486).

Also see Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville,* Madrid: Alianza Universidad, 1989, pp. 227–71.

surprise that they fill no public position.[4] I did not see a single one of them in the administration, and I discovered that they were not even represented within the assemblies.

The law, in several states, had closed a political career to them;[5] opinion, in all the others.

When finally I found out what the mind of the clergy itself was, I noticed that most of its members seemed to remove themselves voluntarily from power, and to take a kind of professional pride in remaining apart from it.

I heard them anathematize ambition and bad faith, whatever the political opinions that ambition and bad faith carefully used to cover themselves. But I learned, by listening to them, that men cannot be blameworthy in the eyes of God because of these very opinions, when the opinions are sincere, and that there is no more sin in being wrong in matters of government than in being mistaken about the way in which your dwelling must be built or your furrow must be plowed.

I saw them separate themselves with care from all parties, and flee contact with all the ardor of personal interest.

These facts succeeded in proving to me that I had been told the truth. Then I wanted to go back from facts to causes. I asked myself how it could happen that by diminishing the apparent strength of a religion, you

4. *Unless you give this name to the functions that many among them occupy in schools. Most education is confided to the clergy.*

5. *See the Constitution of New York, art. 7, #4.*

Id. *of North Carolina, art. 31.*
Id. *of Virginia.*
Id. *of South Carolina, art. 1, #23.*
Id. *of Kentucky, art. 2, #26.*
Id. *of Tennessee, art. 8, #1.*
Id. *of Louisiana, art. 2, #22.*

The article of the Constitution of New York is formulated as follows:

> And whereas the ministers of the gospel are, by their profession, dedicated to the service of God and the care of souls, and ought not to be diverted from the great duties of their function; therefore, no minister of the gospel, or priest of any denomination whatsoever, shall, at any time hereafter, under any presence or description whatever, be eligible to, or capable of holding, any civil or military office or place within this State.

came to increase its true power, and I believed that it was not impossible to find out.

Never will the short space of sixty years enclose all of the imagination of man; the incomplete joys of this world will never be enough for his heart. Among all beings, man alone shows a natural distaste for existence and an immense desire to exist: he scorns life and fears nothingness. These different instincts constantly push his soul toward the contemplation of another world, and it is religion that leads him there. So religion is only a particular form of hope, and it is as natural to the human heart as hope itself.[u] It is by a type of mental aberration and with the help of a kind of moral violence exercised over their own nature, that men remove themselves from religious beliefs; an irresistible inclination brings them back to beliefs. Unbelief is an accident; faith alone is the permanent state of humanity.

So by considering religion only from a human viewpoint, you can say that all religions draw from man himself an element of strength that they can never lack, because it is due to one of the constituent principles of human nature.

I know that there are times when religion can add to this influence, which is its own, the artificial power of laws and the support of the physical powers that lead society. We have seen religions, intimately united with

u. What touches me more than the miracles and the prophecies is the very character of Christianity. There is the greatest sign of its divine origin. Give honor to all the religious codes of the world, you will see that they necessarily apply to a certain country, to certain mores, to a particular social state or people. I do not examine the proofs of these religions, and I say that they are false, because they are not made for all times and for all men. But Christianity seems universal and immortal like the human species./

The influence that religion exercises over mores in the United States must not be exaggerated; it is not sufficient to make a *virtuous* people, but an *orderly* one./

Its action on the women. It is the women who make mores.

I said that democracy was the form of government in which it was most desirable that the people be happy; it is also the one in which it is most desirable that the people be moral and for the same reason.

I would not hesitate to say, because I write in an irreligious century, that in the United States religion is the first of political institutions. And I even add that I am that much less afraid to say so because of this reason (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 58).

the governments of the earth, dominate souls by terror and by faith at the same time; but when a religion contracts such an alliance, I am not afraid to say, it acts as a man could: it sacrifices the future with the present in mind, and by obtaining a power that is not its due, it puts its legitimate power at risk.

When a religion seeks to found its dominion only on the desire for immortality that equally torments the hearts of all men, it can aim for universality; but when it comes to unite with a government, it must adopt maxims that are applicable only to certain peoples. Therefore, by allying itself to a political power, religion increases its power over some and loses the hope of reigning over all.

As long as a religion relies only on the sentiments that console all miseries, it can attract the heart of the human species. Mingled with the bitter passions of this world, religion is sometimes constrained to defend allies that have offered interest rather than love; and it must reject as adversaries men who often still love it, even as they fight those men with whom religion is united. So religion cannot share the material strength of those who govern without burdening itself with a portion of the hatreds caused by those who govern.

The political powers that appear most established have as a guarantee of their continued existence only the opinions of a generation, the interests of a century, often the life of a man. A law can modify the social state that seems most definitive and most firm, and with it everything changes.

The powers of society are all more or less fleeting, just as our years upon the earth; they rapidly follow one another, like the various cares of life; and you have never seen a government that relied on an invariable disposition of the human heart and that was able to base itself on an immortal interest.

As long as a religion finds its strength in the sentiments, the instincts, the passions that are reproduced in the same way in all periods of history, it defies the effort of time, or at least it can be destroyed only by another religion. [Political powers can do nothing against it.] But when religion wants to rely on the interests of this world, it becomes almost as fragile as all the powers of the earth. Alone, religion can hope for immortality; tied

to ephemeral powers, it follows their fortune, and often falls with the passions of the day that sustain those powers.

So by uniting with different political powers, religion can only contract an onerous alliance. It does not need their help to live, and by serving them it can die.

The danger that I have just pointed out exists at all times, but it is not always as visible.

There are centuries when governments appear immortal, and others when you would say that the existence of society is more fragile than that of a man.

Certain constitutions keep citizens in a sort of lethargic sleep, and others deliver them to a feverish agitation.

When governments seem so strong and laws so stable, men do not notice the danger that religion can run by uniting with power.

When governments prove to be so weak and laws so changeable, the peril strikes all eyes, but then there is often no more time to escape. So you must learn to see it from afar.

To the extent that a nation assumes a democratic social state and you see societies lean toward the republic,[v] it becomes more and more dangerous to unite religion with authority; for the time is coming when power will pass from hand to hand, when political theories will succeed one another, when men, laws, constitutions themselves will disappear or change each day, and not for a time, but constantly. Agitation and instability stem from the nature of democratic republics, as immobility and sleep form the law of absolute monarchies.

If the Americans, who change the head of State every four years, who every two years choose new legislators, and replace provincial administrators every year; if the Americans, who have delivered the political world to the experiments of innovators, had not placed their religion somewhere outside of the political world, to what could they cling in the ebb and flow

v. In the manuscript: ". . . you see governments lean and rush toward the republic."

Hervé de Tocqueville: "The words *and rush,* which are meaningless, must be struck out; you could put *and are carried toward"* (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 46).

of human opinions? Amid the struggle of parties, where would the respect be that religion is due? What would become of its immortality when everything perishes around it?

American priests have seen this truth before anyone else, and they model their conduct on it. They have seen that religious influence had to be renounced, if they wanted to acquire a political power, and they preferred to lose the support of power than to share its vicissitudes.

In America, religion is perhaps less powerful than it has been in certain times and among certain peoples, but its influence is more durable. It has reduced itself to its own forces that no one can take away from it; it acts only within a single circle, but it covers it entirely and predominates within it without effort.

In Europe I hear voices that are raised on all sides; people deplore the absence of beliefs and ask how to give religion something of its former power.

It seems to me that we must first try attentively to find out what should be, today, the *natural state* of men in matters of religion. Then, knowing what we are able to hope and what we have to fear, we will see clearly the goal toward which our efforts must tend.

Two great dangers menace the existence of religions: schisms and indifference.

During centuries of fervor, men sometimes happen to abandon their religion, but they escape its yoke only to submit to the yoke of another religion. Faith changes objects; it does not die. The old religion then excites fervent love or implacable hatred in all hearts; some leave it with anger, others follow it with a new ardor: beliefs differ, irreligion is unknown.

But it is not the same when a religious belief is silently undermined by doctrines that I will call negative, because while asserting the falsity of one religion they establish the truth of no other.

Then prodigious revolutions take place in the human spirit, without man seeming to aid the revolutions with his passions and without suspecting them, so to speak. You see men who allow, as if by forgetfulness, the object of their most cherished hopes to escape. Carried along by an imperceptible current against which they do not have the courage to strug-

gle, but to which they yield with regret, they abandon the faith that they love to follow the doubt that leads them to despair.

During the centuries that we have just described, you abandon your beliefs by coldness rather than by hatred; you do not reject them, they leave you. While ceasing to believe religion true, the unbeliever continues to judge it useful. Considering religious beliefs from a human aspect, he recognizes their dominion over mores, their influence over laws. He understands how they can make men live in peace and gently prepare men for death. So he regrets faith after losing it, and deprived of a good of which he knows the whole value, he is afraid to take it away from those who still possess it.

From his side, the one who continues to believe is not afraid to reveal his faith to all eyes. In those who do not share his hopes, he sees unfortunate men rather than adversaries; he knows that he can gain their esteem without following their example; so he is at war with no one; and not considering the society in which he lives as an arena in which religion must struggle constantly against a thousand fierce enemies, he loves his contemporaries at the same time that he condemns their weaknesses and is distressed by their errors.

Those who do not believe, hiding their unbelief, and those who do believe, showing their faith, create a public opinion in favor of religion; it is loved, it is upheld, it is honored, and you must penetrate to the recesses of souls to discover the wounds that it has received.

The mass of men, whom religious sentiment never abandons, then see nothing that separates them from established beliefs. The instinct of another life leads them without difficulty to the foot of altars and delivers their hearts to the precepts and consolations of faith.

Why does this picture not apply to us?

I notice among us men who have ceased to believe in Christianity without adhering to any religion.

I see others who have halted at doubt, and already pretend to believe no more.

Further along, I meet Christians who still believe and dare not say so.

Amid these lukewarm friends and fiery adversaries, I finally discover a small number of the faithful ready to defy all obstacles and to scorn all dangers for their beliefs. The latter have acted contrary to human weakness

in order to rise above common opinion. Carried away by this very effort, they no longer know precisely where they should stop. Since they have seen that, in their country, the first use that man made of independence has been to attack religion, they fear their contemporaries and withdraw with terror from the liberty that the former pursue. Since unbelief appears to them as something new, they include in the same hatred everything that is new.[w] So they are at war with their century and their country, and in each of the opinions that are professed there they see a necessary enemy of faith.

Such should not be today the natural state of man in matters of religion.

An accidental and particular cause is found among us that prevents the human spirit from following its inclination and pushes it beyond the limits at which it should naturally stop.

I am profoundly persuaded that this particular and accidental cause is the intimate union of politics and religion.[x]

w. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> Here are two thoughts that do not seem correct to me. Why would people be carried beyond truth because, to do good, they had the courage to defy prejudice? Then, you will never find faithful people foolish enough to believe that unbelief is something new. This paragraph is to review. The author has not arrived at the true cause of the estrangement of the clergy and of pious persons from free institutions. You must seek it in the memory of the persecutions that religion suffered as soon as the word liberty resounded in France, and in the fear that the persecutions are repeating. The impression was so strong that it is not erased and that pious persons believe that the aegis of an absolute power is necessary in order for priests to be out of danger and for religion to be able to resist philosophical intolerance. The author can link this thought well to earlier ones, for he speaks on page 15 of men without religion who persecute those who believe with all the fervor of proselytism.

Édouard de Tocqueville: "I agree with father. You must absolutely mention the memories of '93 as a powerful cause of the antipathy of the French clergy for liberal ideas" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 46–48). The sentence "Since they have seen . . . pursue" was added following the comments of the family.

x. As for me, I cannot believe that the evil is as great or as profound as is supposed. Never will the religious instinct perish in man, and what can better satisfy it than the religion of J[esus (ed.)]. C[hrist (ed.)].? Christianity is not defeated, it is only bowed down. Formerly religion [v: Christianity] allowed itself to be mingled with the powers of the earth, and today I see it as though buried very much alive under their debris.

Unbelievers in Europe pursue Christians as political enemies, rather than as religious adversaries; they hate faith as the opinion of a party much more than as a mistaken belief; and in the priest they reject the representative of God less than the friend of power.

In Europe, Christianity allowed itself to be intimately united with the powers of the earth. Today these powers are falling and Christianity is as though buried beneath their debris. It is a living thing that someone wanted to bind to the dead: cut the ties that hold it and it will rise again.

I do not know what must be done to give Christianity in Europe the energy of youth. God alone would be able to do so; but at least it depends on men to leave to faith the use of all of the forces that it still retains.

How the Enlightenment, Habits, and Practical Experience of the Americans Contribute to the Success of Democratic Institutions

What must be understood by the enlightenment of the American people.—The human mind has received a less profound cultivation in the United States than in Europe.—But no one has remained in ignorance.—Why.—Rapidity with which thought circulates in the half-empty states of the West.—How practical experience serves Americans even more than literary knowledge.

In a thousand places in this work I have pointed out to readers what influence the enlightenment and habits of the Americans exercised on main-

So let us try to extricate it; it still has enough strength to rise again, but not to lift the weight that overwhelms it. The Christian religion in Europe resembles an old man whose shoulders are loaded down with a heavy burden; he walks painfully across the obstacles in the road. He bends under the weight; his limbs are heavy, his breathing is labored. He walks only with difficulty and at each step you would say he was about to die (YTC, CVh, 4. p. 67; a nearly identical fragment is found in YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 31–32).

taining their political institutions. So now, few new things remain for me to say.

Until now America has had only a very small number of notable writers; it does not have any great historians and does not have one poet. Its inhabitants see literature strictly understood with a kind of disfavor; and a third-rank city in Europe publishes more literary works each year than the twenty-four states of the Union taken together.[y]

The American mind withdraws from general ideas; it does not turn toward theoretical discoveries. Politics itself and industry cannot lead it there. In the United States, new laws are made constantly; but great writers are still not found to seek out the general principles of laws.

The Americans have experts on the law and legal commentators; they lack writers on public affairs; and in politics, they give the world examples rather than lessons.[*]

It is the same for the mechanical arts.

In America, the inventions of Europe are applied with sagacity, and after perfecting them, they are marvelously adapted to the needs of the country. Men there are industrious, but they do not cultivate the science of industry. You find good workers and few inventors there. Fulton[†] peddled his genius for a long time among foreign peoples before being able to devote it to his country. [So in America you find none of those great intellectual centers from which fire and light burst forth at the same time {as in Europe}. I do not know if perhaps we should thank heaven. America already carries an immense weight in the destinies of the world; and per-

y. See chapters XIII and XIV of the first part of the third volume.

[*]. ≠Say a word about Livingston. He is more of a moralist.≠

[†]. ≠He is the one who applied steam to navigation. He offered his secret to Bonaparte who, after an examination, declared the thing absurd and impractical. As we know, one of the weaknesses of Bonaparte {this extraordinary man} was to want to pass judgment at first sight on matters that were foreign to him. Despite his prodigious perspicacity, too frequently he happened to be mistaken.≠

haps it only lacks great writers to overturn violently in a moment all the old societies of Europe.][z]

So whoever wants to judge the state of enlightenment among the Anglo-Americans opens himself to seeing the same subject from two different views. If he pays attention only to the learned, he will be astonished by their small number; and if he counts the ignorant, the American people will seem to him the most enlightened on earth.

The entire population is placed between these two extremes; I have already said it elsewhere.

[In the United States, you find fewer great landowners and infinitely more landowners than anywhere else; less wealth and more comfort. Minds have been subjected to the same law. There scientific and literary genius is as rare as ability is common, and if you do not find great writers, everyone knows how to write. What could be the state of a few minds seems to have been divided equally among all.]

In New England, each citizen receives the elementary notions of human knowledge; furthermore, he learns the doctrines and the proofs of his religion; he is taught the history of his country and the principal features of the Constitution that governs it. In Connecticut and Massachusetts, it is very rare to find a man who only imperfectly knows all these things, and one who is absolutely ignorant of them is in a way a phenomenon.[a]

When I compare the Greek and Roman republics to these republics of America, the manuscript libraries of the first and their coarse populace, to the thousand newspapers that crisscross the second and to the enlightened people that inhabit the republics of America; when I then think of all the efforts that are still made to judge the one with the aid of the others and

z. In the margin:

≠Knowledge of reading and writing (but less useful than you think).
Knowledge of laws.
Experience.
Practical habit of affairs.
Extensive and homogeneous civilization. Pioneer, an ax and newspapers.

a. To the side: "≠Instruction of the Americans of New England is less advanced than in our colleges but more complete than in our schools.≠"

to foresee what will happen today by what happened two thousand years ago, I am tempted to burn my books,[b] in order to apply only new ideas to a social state so new.

You must not indiscriminately extend to the whole Union, moreover, what I say about New England. The more you advance toward the West or toward the South, the more the instruction of the people diminishes. In the states neighboring the Gulf of Mexico, a certain number of individuals are found, as among us, to whom the elements of human knowledge are foreign; but in the United States you would seek in vain for a single district that was plunged into ignorance. The reason for it is simple: the peoples of Europe left the shadows and barbarism in order to advance toward civilization and enlightenment. Their progress was unequal; some ran along the course, others in a way only walked; still others stopped and they are still asleep along the road.

It was not the same in the United States.

The Anglo-Americans arrived fully civilized on the soil that their posterity occupies; they did not have to learn, it was enough for them not to forget. Now, it is the sons of these very Americans who, each year, carry into the wilderness, with their dwelling-place, knowledge already acquired and respect for learning. Education made them feel the usefulness of enlightenment and made them capable of transmitting this very enlightenment to their descendents. So in the United States, society has no childhood; it is born in manhood.

The Americans make no use of the word peasant; they do not employ the word, because they do not have the idea; the ignorance of the first ages, the simplicity of the fields, the rusticity of the village, have not been preserved among them, and they imagine neither the virtues, nor the vices, nor the coarse habits, nor the innocent graces of a civilization being born.

At the extreme limits of the confederated states, at the confines of society and wilderness, is a population of hardy adventurers who, in order to flee the poverty ready to strike them under the paternal roof, have not been

b. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I do not like this idea. Why would you burn your books because a thousand newspapers crisscross the territory of the Union?" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 42).

afraid to plunge into the empty areas of America and seek a new country there. Having barely arrived at the place that must serve him as a refuge, the pioneer hastily cuts down a few trees and raises a cabin under the leafy branches. Nothing offers a more miserable sight than these isolated dwellings. The traveler who approaches them toward the evening notices from afar the flame of the hearth shining through the walls; and at night, if the wind comes up, he hears the roof of foliage move noisily amid the trees of the forest. Who would not believe that this poor cottage serves as a refuge for coarseness and ignorance? You must not, however, establish any correlation between the pioneer and the place that serves him as a refuge. Everything is primitive and savage around him, but he is so to speak the result of eighteen centuries of efforts and experience. He wears city clothing, speaks the language of the city, knows the past, is curious about the future, argues about the present; he is a very civilized man who, for a time, submits to living in the woods and who plunges into the wilderness of the New World with the Bible, an ax and some newspapers.[c]

It is difficult to imagine with what incredible rapidity thought circulates in the heart of these wilderness areas.[6]

I do not believe that there is as great an intellectual movement in the most enlightened and most populated districts of France.[7]

c. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Could you not put: *an ax, tea and newspapers?* Tea, being something of a luxury, gives the idea of civilization" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 43). See, in appendix II, volume IV, pp. 1315–16, the description of the dwelling of the pioneer.

6. *I traveled over a part of the frontiers of the United States in a type of open carriage that was called a coach. We moved along briskly day and night over roads scarcely cleared amid immense forests of green trees; when the darkness became impenetrable, my driver lighted branches of larch and we continued our route by their light. Here and there we encountered a cabin amid the woods: it was the post office. At the door of this isolated dwelling, the mailman threw an enormous packet of letters, and we resumed our course at a gallop, leaving to each inhabitant in the neighborhood the care of coming to find his part of the treasure.*

7. *In 1832, each inhabitant of Michigan provided 1.22 fr. to the postal tax, and each inhabitant of Florida 1.5 fr. (see* National Calendar, *1833, p. 244 [249 (ed.)]). In the same year, each inhabitant of the* département du Nord *paid the State, for the same purpose, 1.4 fr. (see* Compte général de l'administration des finances, *1833, p. 623). Now, at this time Michigan still had only seven inhabitants per square league, and Florida, five; instruction was less widespread and activity not as great in these two districts as in most of the states of*

You cannot doubt that in the United States the instruction of the people serves powerfully to maintain the democratic republic. It will be so, I think, everywhere that the instruction that enlightens the mind is not separated from the education that regulates mores.

Nonetheless, I do not exaggerate this advantage, and I am still far from believing, as a great number of people in Europe do, that it is sufficient to teach men to read and write to make them citizens immediately. [<≠I do not consider elementary knowledge as the most potent means to educate the people; it facilitates the study of liberty for them, but it does not give them the art of being free.≠>]

True enlightenment arises principally from experience, and if the Americans had not been accustomed little by little to governing themselves, the book learning that they possess would not be a great help today in succeeding to do so.

I have lived a great deal with the people of the United States, and I cannot say how much I have admired their experience and their good sense.[e]

Do not lead the American to speak about Europe; he will ordinarily show a great presumption and a quite foolish pride. He will be content with those general and indefinite ideas that, in all countries, are such a great help to the ignorant. But interrogate him about his country, and you will see the cloud that enveloped his mind suddenly dissipate; his language will become clear, plain and precise, like his thought. He will teach you what his rights are and what means he must use to exercise them; he will know by what practices the political world operates. You will notice that the rules of administration are known to him and that he has made himself familiar with the mechanism of the laws. The inhabitant of the United States has not

the Union, while the département du Nord, *which includes 3,400 inhabitants per square league, is one of the most enlightened and most industrial portions of France.*[d]

d. "It is now a matter of comparing this to France, but for that it would be necessary to have the budget and even statistical details that probably are not to be found [in the *National Calendar* (ed.)]. Ask D'Aunay and N. [*sic*] Roger of the French Academy" (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 16). It undoubtedly concerns Félix Le Peletier d'Aunay and Jean-François Roger.

e. To the side: "It is truly from this side that the Americans are [v: the United States prove to be] superior to all the peoples of the world."

drawn this practical knowledge and these positive notions from books; his formal education may have prepared him to receive them, but has not provided him with them.

It is by participating in legislation that the American learns to know the laws; it is by governing that he finds out about the forms of government. The great work of society is carried out each day before his eyes and, so to speak, by his hands.

In the United States, the whole of the education of men is directed toward politics; in Europe, its principal goal is to prepare for private life. The activity of citizens in public affairs is too rare a fact to be anticipated in advance.

As soon as you cast your eyes on the two societies, these differences are revealed even in their external appearance.

In Europe, we often bring the ideas and habits of private existence into public life, and as we happen to pass suddenly from the interior of the family to the government of the State, you often see us discuss the great interests of society in the same way we converse with our friends.

In contrast, the Americans almost always carry the habits of public life into private life. Among them, the idea of the jury is found in school games, and you find parliamentary forms even in the order of a banquet.

That Laws Serve More to Maintain the Democratic Republic in the United States than Physical Causes, and Mores More than Laws

All the peoples of America have a democratic social state.—Democratic institutions only continue to exist however among the Anglo-Americans.—The Spanish of South America, as favored by physical nature as the Anglo-Americans, are not able to support the democratic republic.—Mexico, which has adopted the Constitution of the United States, is not able to do it.—The Anglo-Americans of the West support it with more difficulty than those of the East.—Reasons for these differences.

I said that maintaining democratic institutions in the United States had to be attributed to circumstances, laws and mores.[8]

Most Europeans know only the first of these three causes, and they give it a preponderant importance that it does not have.

It is true that the Anglo-Americans brought equality of conditions to the New World. Never were either commoners or nobles found among them; prejudices of birth there have always been as unknown as prejudices of profession. Since the social state is therefore democratic, democracy had no difficulty establishing its dominion.

But this fact is not particular to the United States; nearly all the colonies of America were founded by men equal among themselves or who became equal by inhabiting the colonies. There is not a single part of the New World where Europeans were able to create an aristocracy.

Democratic institutions prosper only in the United States, however.

The American Union has no enemies to fight. It is alone in the middle of the wilderness like an island in the heart of the Ocean.

But nature had isolated in the same way the Spanish of [{Mexico, those of Peru}] South America [{the Portuguese of Brazil, the French of the Antilles, the Dutch of Guyana}], and this isolation did not prevent them from maintaining armies. They made war on each other when foreigners were lacking. Only the Anglo-American democracy, until now, has been able to remain at peace.

The territory of the Union presents a limitless field to human activity; it offers an inexhaustible sustenance to industry and to work. So love of wealth takes the place of ambition there, and well-being quells the fervor of parties.

But in what portion of the world do you meet more fertile wildernesses, larger rivers, more untouched and more inexhaustible riches than in South America? Yet South America cannot support democracy. If, for peoples to be happy, it was sufficient to have been placed in a corner of the universe

8. *Here I recall to the reader the general sense in which I take the word* mores; *I understand by this word the whole of the intellectual and moral dispositions that man brings to the state of society.*

and to be able to spread at will over uninhabited lands, the Spanish of South America would not have to complain about their lot. And when they would not enjoy the same happiness as the inhabitants of the United States, they would at least make the peoples of Europe envious. There are, however, no nations on the earth more miserable than those of South America.

Therefore, not only can physical causes not lead to analogous results among the Americans of the South and those of the North, but they cannot even produce among the first something that is not inferior to what is seen in Europe, where physical causes act in an opposite direction.

So physical causes do not influence the destiny of nations as much as is supposed.[f]

I met men of New England ready to abandon a country where they would have been able to find ease and comfort, in order to go to seek their fortune in the wilderness. Nearby, I saw the French population of Canada squeeze itself into a space too small for it, when the same wilderness was near; and while the emigrant of the United States acquired a great estate at the cost of a few days of work, the Canadian paid as much for land as if he still lived in France.

Thus nature, while delivering the uninhabited areas of the New World to Europeans, offers them assets that they do not always know how to use.

I notice among other peoples of America the same conditions of prosperity as among the Anglo-Americans, without their laws and their mores; and these peoples are miserable. So the laws and mores of the Anglo-Americans form the special reason for their grandeur and the predominant cause that I am seeking.

I am far from pretending that there is an absolute good in American laws; I do not believe that they are applicable to all democratic peoples; and, among those laws, there are several that, even in the United States, seem dangerous to me.

You cannot deny, however, that the legislation of the Americans, taken

f. In the margin: "≠So the original equality of conditions and the nature of the country do not explain in a sufficient way what is happening in the United States. Because elsewhere these same causes do not produce the same effects.≠"

as a whole, is well adapted to the genius of the people that it must govern and to the nature of the country.[g]

So American laws are good, and a great part of the success that the government of democracy achieves in America must be attributed to them; but I do not think that they are the principal cause. And if the laws appear to me to have more influence on the social happiness of the Americans than the very nature of the country, from another perspective I see reasons to believe that they exercise less influence than mores.

The federal laws surely form the most important portion of the legislation of the United States.

Mexico, which is as happily situated as the Anglo-American Union, appropriated these same laws, and it is not able to get accustomed to the government of democracy.

So there is a reason independent of physical causes and laws that makes democracy able to govern the United States.[h]

But here is what proves it even more. Nearly all the men who inhabit the territory of the Union are born of the same blood. They speak the same language, pray to God in the same way, are subject to the same physical causes, obey the same laws.

So what produces the differences that must be observed among them?

Why, in the [{North}] East of the Union, does republican government appear strong and well-ordered, why does it proceed with maturity and deliberation? What cause marks all its acts with a character of wisdom and lasting existence?

Why, in contrast, do the powers of society in the West [{and in the South}] seem to move haphazardly?

g. To the side: "And in certain cases, it would be more correct to say that the Americans prosper despite their laws rather than thanks to them."

h. "Mexico is not able to support the republic, however. The republic prospers only within the Anglo-American Union. From so many similar causes, the Union a different one. And this cause of prosperity which is special prevails over all the others together. The people of the Union are not only the most religious and most enlightened in the world, they are also the ones whose political education is the most advanced" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 45).

Why, in the movement of affairs, does something disorderly, passionate, you could almost say feverish, reign that does not herald a long future?

I am no longer comparing the Anglo-Americans to foreign peoples; now I am contrasting the Anglo-Americans to each other, and I am seeking why they do not resemble each other. Here all arguments drawn from the nature of the country and from the difference of laws are missing at the same time. I must resort to some other cause; and where will I find this cause, if not in mores?

It is in the East [{North}] that the Anglo-Americans have contracted the longest use of the government of democracy, and that they have formed habits and conceived ideas most favorable to maintaining it. [In the North] Democracy there has little by little penetrated customs, opinions, forms; you find it in all the details of social life as in the laws. It is in the East [{North}] that the book learning and the practical education of the people have been most perfected and that religion has best intermingled with liberty. What are all these habits, these opinions, these customs, these beliefs, if not what I called mores?

In the West, in contrast, a part of these same advantages is still lacking. Many Americans of the states of the West are born in the woods, and they mix with the civilization of their fathers the ideas and customs of savage life. Among them, passions are more violent, religious morality less powerful, ideas less settled. Men there exercise no control over each other, for they scarcely know each other.[j] So the nations of the West show, to a certain extent, the inexperience and the unruly habits of emerging peoples. Societies in the West are formed from old elements; but the assembly is new.[k]

j. In a slip of paper inserted in the manuscript:

Three centuries ago the English colonies were founded, but only sixty years ago national and centralized governments were established among them. Before this time citizens [v: subjects], dispersed in a vast wilderness two thousand leagues from the sovereign, lived in an almost complete independence. Which really explains why, among the Americans, individuals always appear experienced and [often] the State, inexperienced.

k. In the North the republic is a strong and well-ordered government, which proceeds

So mores, particularly, make the Americans of the United States, alone among all Americans, capable of supporting the dominion of democracy; and mores also make the various Anglo-American democracies more or less well-regulated and prosperous.

Therefore, in Europe, the influence that the geographic position of the country exercises on the continued existence of democratic institutions is exaggerated. Too much importance is attributed to laws, too little to mores. These three great causes undoubtedly serve to regulate and to direct American democracy; but if they had to be classified, I would say that physical causes contribute less than laws, and laws infinitely less than mores.

I am persuaded that the most fortunate situation and the best laws cannot maintain a constitution in spite of mores, while the latter still turn to good account the most unfavorable positions and the worst laws. The importance of mores is a common truth to which study and experience constantly lead. It seems to me that I find it placed in my mind like a central point; I see it at the end of all my ideas.[m]

I have only one more word to say on this subject.

If, in the course of this work, I have not succeeded in making the reader

with maturity and deliberation, and which marks all its acts with a character of wisdom and lasting existence. In the West and in the South, the powers of society seem in contrast to move haphazardly, and there you observe, in the movement of affairs, something disorderly, passionate and you could almost say feverish that heralds neither strength nor continued existence [nor (ed.)] a long future (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 47).

m. Of the superiority of mores over laws./

After I have reflected carefully about the principles that make governments act, about those that sustain them or ruin them; when I have spent a good deal of time carefully calculating what the influence of laws is, their relative goodness and their tendency, I always arrive at this point that, above and beyond all these considerations, beyond all these laws, I find a power superior to them. It is the *spirit* and the *mores* of the people, their *character.* The best laws are not able to make a constitution work in spite of the mores; mores turn to good account the worst laws. That is a common truth, but one to which my studies bring me back constantly. It is placed in my mind like a central point; I see it at the end of all my ideas.

Laws, however, work toward producing the spirit, the mores and the character of the people. But in what proportion? There is the great problem that we cannot think about too much (YTC, CVe, p. 52; you can find the same fragment with a few differences, in YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 46–47).

feel the importance that I attributed to the practical experience of the Americans, to their habits, to their opinions, in a word, to their mores, in maintaining their laws, I have missed the principal goal that I set for myself by writing it.

Would Laws and Mores Be Sufficient to Maintain Democratic Institutions Elsewhere than in America?

The Anglo-Americans, transported to Europe, would be obliged to modify their laws.—Democratic institutions must be distinguished from American institutions.—You can imagine democratic laws better than or at least different from those that American democracy has given itself.—The example of America proves only that we must not despair of regulating democracy with the aid of laws and mores.

I said[n] that the success of democratic institutions in the United States was due to the laws themselves and to mores more than to the nature of the country.

But does it follow that these same causes alone transported elsewhere have the same power, and if the country cannot take the place of laws and mores, can laws and mores in turn take the place of the country?

Here you will understand without difficulty that the elements of proof are lacking. In the New World you meet peoples other than the Anglo-Americans, and since these peoples are subject to the same physical causes as the latter, I have been able to compare them to each other.

But outside of America there are no nations that, deprived of the same physical advantages as the Anglo-Americans, have still adopted their laws and their mores.

n. In the manuscript: "I proved . . ."

Édouard de Tocqueville (or Louis de Kergorlay?): "I propose to put: *I believe that I proved.* The peremptory tone must be avoided" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 27).

Therefore we do not have a point of comparison in this matter; we can only hazard opinions.

It seems to me first that the institutions of the United States must be carefully distinguished from democratic institutions in general.

When I think of the state of Europe, its great peoples, its populous cities, its formidable armies, the complexities of its politics, I cannot believe that the Anglo-Americans themselves, transported with their ideas, their religion, their mores to our soil, could live there without considerably modifying their laws.

But you can imagine a democratic people organized in a different manner from the American people.

Is it impossible to conceive of a government based on the real will of the majority, but in which the majority, doing violence to its natural instincts of equality, in favor of order and the stability of the State, would consent to vest a family or a man with all the attributions of the executive power? Can you not imagine a democratic society in which national forces would be more centralized than in the United States, in which the people would exercise a less direct and less irresistible dominion over general affairs, and in which, nonetheless, each citizen, vested with certain rights, would, within his sphere, take part in the working of the government?[o]

What I saw among the Anglo-Americans leads me to believe that democratic institutions of this nature, introduced prudently into so-

o. Hervé de Tocqueville:

Here royalty or the monarchy, and if possible the hereditary monarchy, must find a place. It is indispensable that the author establish that the monarchical State is not incompatible with democratic institutions.

Alexis must pay the greatest attention to avoid a pitfall in which he would be destroyed, that of allowing the belief that he has written a book in favor of the republic. Beyond the fact that reason, enlightened by experience, rejects the possibility of establishing republics strictly speaking among the great European nations, the idea and even the word republic are antipathetic to the very great majority of the French. So if Alexis left the slightest doubt about his dispositions on this subject, he would be blamed by the very greatest number and applauded only by a few scatterbrains and a few muddleheads (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 15).

ciety,[p] which would mix little by little with the habits and would gradually merge with the very opinions of the people, would be able to subsist elsewhere than in America.[q]

If the laws of the United States were the only democratic laws that could be imagined or the most perfect that it is possible to find, I understand that you could conclude that the success of the laws of the United States proves nothing for the success of democratic laws in general, in a country less favored by nature.

But if the laws of the Americans seem to me defective in many points, and it is easy for me to imagine others, the special nature of the country does not prove to me that democratic institutions cannot succeed among a people where, physical circumstances being less favorable, the laws would be better.

If men showed themselves to be different in America from what they are elsewhere; if their social state gave birth among them to habits and opinions contrary to those that are born in Europe from this same social state, what happens in the American democracies would teach nothing about what should happen in other democracies.

If the Americans showed the same tendencies as all the other democratic peoples, and their legislators resorted to the nature of the country and to the favor of circumstances in order to keep these tendencies within just

p. In the margin: "I can imagine a democratic nation in which, because political life was more active and more threatened, the executive power was stronger and more active than it has been until now in the New World."

q. Édouard de Tocqueville or Louis de Kergorlay:

> Here you seem to formulate a desire, and that seems to me to move away from the goal of your work, beyond other disadvantages that it can have in my view.
>
> Your book can only aspire to a great and general influence if you are very careful not to make yourself into a party man. Now, if you show yourself or if some see you as a republican, you will be considered as a party man.
>
> Take care that this ending does not appear as a plea on behalf of the republic. I tell you this from my soul and conscience, that ending has the appearance of being so and will be regarded as such; now this is what you have always told me you wanted to avoid.
>
> To show, to demonstrate that free institutions can be established in a lasting way only sheltered by morality and religious spirit is a superb thought. It is your whole book. Try not to compromise it (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 27–28).

limits, the prosperity of the United States, having to be attributed to purely physical causes, would prove nothing in favor of peoples who would like to follow their example without having their natural advantages.[r]

But neither the one nor the other of these suppositions is justified by the facts.

I encountered in America passions analogous to those we see in Europe. Some were due to the very nature of the human heart; others, to the democratic state of society.

Thus I found in the United States the restlessness of heart that is natural to man when, all conditions being more or less equal, each one sees the same chances to rise. There I encountered the democratic sentiment of envy expressed in a thousand different ways. I observed that the people often showed, in the conduct of affairs, a great blend of presumption and ignorance, and I concluded that in America, as among us, men were subject to the same imperfections and exposed to the same miseries.

But when I came to examine attentively the state of society, I discovered without difficulty that the Americans had made great and happy efforts to combat these weaknesses of the human heart and to correct these natural defects of democracy.

Their various municipal laws appeared to me as so many barriers that held within a narrow sphere the restless ambition of citizens, and turned to the profit of the town the same democratic passions that could overturn the State. It seemed to me that American legislators had managed to oppose, not without success, the idea of rights to the sentiments of envy; the immobility of religious morality, to the continual movements of the political world; the experience of the people, to their theoretical ignorance; and their habit of affairs, to the hotheadedness of their desires.

So the Americans did not resort to the nature of the country to combat the dangers that arise from their constitution [v: social state] and from their

r. Édouard de Tocqueville or Louis de Kergorlay: "You give, it seems to me, in this paragraph and in a few others of the preceding chapter much too great an influence to the physical nature of a country on the mores and the tendencies of the inhabitants of this country. This influence is not non-existent, but it is far, I believe, from being what you suppose" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 28).

political laws. To the evils that they share with all democratic peoples, they applied remedies that until now only they were aware of; and although they were the first to try them out, they succeeded.

The mores and laws of the Americans are not the only ones that can be suitable for democratic peoples; but the Americans have shown that we must not despair of regulating democracy with the help of laws and mores.

If other peoples, borrowing from America this general and fruitful idea, and without wishing to imitate the inhabitants of America in the particular application that they have made of this idea, attempted to adapt themselves to the social state that Providence imposes on men today, and thus sought to escape the despotism or the anarchy that threatens them, what reasons do we have to believe that they must fail in their efforts?[s]

The organization and the establishment of democracy among Christians is the great political problem of our time. The Americans undoubtedly do not solve this problem, but they provide useful lessons to those who want to solve it.

s. In the manuscript:

If other democratic nations less fortunately situated than the American people, but instructed by experience, succeeded in making use of its discoveries while rejecting its errors, what reason do we have to believe that they must fail in their efforts? So if the example of the United States does not prove in a sufficient way that all countries can adapt themselves to democratic institutions, you can infer even less from it that democratic institutions suit only the United States.

Importance of What Precedes in Relation to Europe[t]

You easily discover why I have engaged in the research that precedes.[u] The question that I have raised interests not only the United States, but the entire world; not one nation, but all men.

If peoples whose social state is democratic could remain free only when they lived in the wilderness, we would have to despair of the future fate of the human species; for men are marching rapidly toward democracy, and wildernesses are filling.

If it were true that laws and mores were insufficient for maintaining democratic institutions, what other refuge would remain for nations, if not the despotism of one man?[v]

I know that today there are many honest men hardly frightened by this future, who, fatigued by liberty, would love finally to rest far from its storms.[w]

t. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> I begin my remarks with a general observation which is suggested to me by the very title of this chapter. The author speaks about all of Europe; but he draws his arguments only from the current social state of France, a social state which that of several other great nations of Europe will not resemble for many years to come. All his descriptions portray what is happening in France and not elsewhere. All his predictions relate to France; but he is addressing himself to the whole of Europe. Isn't it to be feared that a strict and exact reader might make this remark with a sort of blame?" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 36).

u. "When I searched for the causes that serve most powerfully to maintain democratic institutions, I did not abandon myself to a vain curiosity. While looking at America, I still saw Europe; and while thinking about American liberty, I thought of that of all men" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 68).

v. In the manuscript: "if not {monarchy} {absolute power} slavery?"

Édouard de Tocqueville (?): "You must be careful not to use these expressions unstintingly: *slavery, servitude,* which perhaps smack a bit of the orator, as if there were not a thousand degrees between absolute liberty and complete enslavement!" (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 29–30).

w. In the margin:

> ≠Today.
> Liberty with its storms.

But the latter know very badly the port toward which they are heading. Preoccupied by their memories, they judge absolute power by what it was formerly, and not by what it could be today. [There are differences even in despotism, as in liberty.]

If absolute power came to be established once again among the democratic peoples of Europe, I do not doubt that it would take a new form and would show itself with features unknown to our fathers.

There was a time in Europe when the law, as well as the consent of the people, had vested kings with a power almost without limits. But they hardly ever happened to use it.

[They had the right rather than the practice of omnipotence.]

I will not talk about the prerogatives of the nobility, about the authority of the sovereign courts, about the right of corporations, about provincial privileges, which, while softening the blows of authority, maintained a spirit of resistance in the nation.

These political institutions, though often contrary to the liberty of individuals, nonetheless served to foster the love of liberty in souls, and in this respect their utility is easily conceived. Apart from these institutions, opinions and mores raised less known, but no less powerful barriers around royal power.

Religion, love of subjects, the goodness of the prince, honor, family spirit, provincial prejudices, custom and public opinion limited the power of kings and enclosed their authority within an invisible circle.

Despotism with its rigors.

Nothing intermediate between.

Something like the Roman empire.

So there is only one path to salvation, which is to seek to regulate liberty. To moralize democracy.

As for me, I believe that the enterprise is possible.

I am not saying that we must do as America; I am not saying that the Americans have done the best.

(Is there only one type of republic, only one type of royalty?) in the same way there is more than one way to make democracy rule.≠

Then the constitution of peoples was despotic and their mores, free. Princes had the right, but neither the faculty nor the desire to do everything.

Of the barriers that formerly stopped tyranny, what remains to us today?

Since religion has lost its dominion over souls, the most visible limit that divided good and bad is overturned; all seems doubtful and uncertain in the moral realm; kings and people move there haphazardly, and no one can say where the natural limits of despotism and the bounds of license are.

Long revolutions have forever destroyed the respect that surrounded heads of State. Released from the weight of public esteem, princes can henceforth abandon themselves without fear to being drunk with power.[x]

When kings see, coming before them, the heart of peoples, they are lenient because they feel strong; and they treat the love of their subjects carefully, because the love of subjects is the support of the throne. Then, between the prince and the people, an exchange of sentiments is established whose gentleness recalls within society the interior of the family. Subjects, while murmuring against the sovereign, are still distressed to displease him, and the sovereign strikes his subjects with a light hand, as a father chastises his children.

But once the prestige of royalty has vanished amid the tumult of revolutions; when kings, following each other upon the throne, have one by one exposed to the view of the people the weakness of *right* and the harsh-

x. Hervé de Tocqueville:

Released from the weight of public esteem, etc. First, I observe that this paragraph and the two following are badly placed; they are inserted in a series of ideas that they interrupt. As for the sentence of which I have quoted the first words, it is turned in a picturesque and energetic way, but it lacks clarity; the author wants to say that kings will more easily do ill because they will no longer have to fear the loss of public esteem. There is the sense; but one searches for it. Is the idea, moreover, very correct? Although the prestige of royalty is partially destroyed, a good king who is an honest man will always garner public esteem and this esteem will be a barrier to his passions (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 37–38).

ness of *fact,*[y] no one any longer sees in the sovereign the father of the State, and each one sees a master there. If he is weak, he is scorned; he is hated if he is strong. He is himself full of rage and fear; he sees himself as a stranger in his country and treats his subjects as the vanquished.

When provinces and cities were so many different nations in the middle of the common native land, each one of them had a particular spirit that opposed the general spirit of servitude; but today when, after losing their franchises, their customs, their prejudices and even their memories and their names, all parts of the same empire have become accustomed to obeying the same laws, it is no more difficult to oppress all of them together than to oppress one separately from the rest.

While the nobility enjoyed its power, and still long after it had lost it, aristocratic honor gave an extraordinary strength to individual resistance.

Then you saw men who, despite their impotence, still maintained a high idea of their individual value, and dared to resist in isolation the exertion of public power. [<For honor is a religion; it cannot be conquered by force.>][z]

But today, when all classes are merging together, when the individual disappears more and more in the crowd and is easily lost amid the common obscurity; today, when nothing any longer sustains man above himself, be-

y. Hervé de Tocqueville:

You must put *the weakness of right and the harshness of fact.* It is essential that Alexis be very careful not to strike the fallen Restoration and the deposed and unhappy sovereigns. It would perhaps even be appropriate enough that he not strike Louis-Philippe too hard. Alexis is beginning his career; it would be disagreeable for him to have all the government newspapers against him. This is undoubtedly a very secondary consideration, but it will be good to consider it (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 38–39).

z. Édouard de Tocqueville (?):

All that is good in thought and style. Nothing easier than to keep it while indicating precisely how far we are by our mores from the mores of the Americans. A truth that is good to put in relief, because if we succeed in changing our mores, we will perhaps be worthy of the pure democratic state that is perhaps in fact the best. But how far we are from that! And for how long a time still would a similar attempt be fatal! (YTC, CIIIb, 1, p. 30).

cause monarchical honor has nearly lost its dominion without being replaced by virtue,[a] who can say where the exigencies of [absolute] power and the indulgences of weakness would stop?

As long as family spirit lasted, the man who struggled against tyranny was never alone; he found around him clients, hereditary friends, close relatives. And if this support were missing, he still felt sustained by his ancestors and roused by his descendants. But when patrimonies are dividing, and when in so few years races are merging, where to locate family spirit?

[≠Within a restless crowd a man surrounded by soldiers will come to take a place. No one will see in him the father of the State. Each one will

a. Of virtue in republics./

The Americans are not a virtuous people and yet they are free. This does not absolutely prove that virtue, as Montesquieu thought, is not essential to the existence of republics. The idea of Montesquieu must not be taken in a narrow sense. What this g[reat (ed.)]. m[an (ed.)]. meant is that republics could subsist only by the action of society over itself. What he means by virtue is the moral power that each individual exercises over himself and that prevents him from violating the right of others.

When this triumph of man over temptation is the result of the weakness of the temptation or of a calculation of personal interest, it does not constitute virtue in the eyes of the moralist; but it is included in the idea of Montesquieu who spoke of the effect much more than of the cause. In America it is not virtue that is great, it is temptation that is small, which comes to the same thing. It is not disinterestedness that is great, it is interest that is well understood, which again comes back to almost the same thing. So Montesquieu was right although he spoke about ancient virtue, and what he says of the Greeks and Romans is still applicable to the Americans (YTC, CVe, pp. 66–67).

During his journey, however, Tocqueville had noted:

> The principle of the ancient republics was the sacrifice of particular interest to the general good. In this sense, you can say that they were *virtuous.* The principle of this one appears to me to be to make particular interest part of the general interest. A kind of refined and intelligent egoism seems the pivot on which the whole machine turns. These people do not trouble themselves to find out if public virtue is good, but they claim to prove that it is useful. If this last point is true, as I think it is in part, this society can pass for enlightened, but not virtuous. But to what degree can the two principles of individual good and general good in fact be merged? To what point will a conscience that you could call a conscience of reflection and calculation be able to control the political passions that have not yet arisen, but which will not fail to arise? That is what the future alone will show us. Sing-Sing, 29 May, 1831 (alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 234–35).

see a master. He will no longer be respected; he will be feared; and love will be replaced by fear.

He himself will be agitated and restless. He will feel that he rules only by force and not by right, by fear and not by love. His subjects will be strangers in his eyes; he himself will be a stranger in theirs.≠]

What strength remains to customs among a people who have changed entirely and who change constantly, where all the acts of tyranny already have a precedent, where all crimes can rest on an example, where you can find nothing so old that you are afraid to destroy it, nor anything so new that you cannot dare to do it?

What resistance is offered by mores that have already given way so many times?

What can public opinion itself do, when not *twenty*[b] persons are gathered together by a common bond; when there is neither a man, nor a family, nor a body, nor a class, nor a free association that can represent and get this opinion to act?

When each citizen equally impotent, equally poor, equally isolated can oppose only his individual weakness to the organized strength of the government?

In order to imagine something analogous to what would then happen among us,[c] you must resort not to our historical annals. You must perhaps search the memorials of antiquity[d] and refer to those horrible centuries of Roman tyranny, when mores were corrupt, memories obliterated, habits destroyed, [religions shaken], opinions wavering; liberty, chased from the laws, no longer knew where to take refuge in order to find a shelter. Then nothing protected citizens any longer, and citizens no longer protected

b. Allusion to the French law of association that demanded prior permission for all meetings of more than twenty persons.

c. In the manuscript: ". . . among the nations of Europe."

d. Édouard de Tocqueville (?): "I contest this idea. Antiquity is so far away, so different from our current social state, that you cannot, I believe, draw from it any point of comparison to what exists today. And I think that amid the general divergence of opinions, the only incontestable point is that what is happening in our time is without precedents" (YTC, CIIIb, pp. 30–31).

themselves; you saw men mock human nature and princes exhaust the mercy of heaven rather than the patience of their subjects.[e]

Those who think to rediscover the monarchy of Henry IV or Louis XIV seem very blind to me. As for me, when I consider the state which several European nations have already reached and toward which all the others are tending, I feel myself led to believe that among them there will soon no longer be a place except for democratic liberty[f] or for the tyranny of the Caesars.[g]

Doesn't this merit reflection? If men must in fact reach the point where they must all be made free or all slaves, all equal in rights or all deprived of rights; if those who govern societies were reduced to the alternative of gradually raising the crowd up to their level or allowing all citizens to fall below

e. "Characteristics of Roman society./
No more {love of country} patriotism.
No more fear of God.
Individual egoism" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 57). See note a for p. 18.

f. "If peoples saw a stopping point between absolute power and democratic government, they would do well to settle there. But this point does not exist, and they must keep moving" (YTC, CVh, 4, pp. 53–54).

g. Hervé de Tocqueville:

> The two paragraphs of these two pages are very beautiful in style, written with great force, but the colors are too dark. The horrible state of Rome under the Caesars is not to be feared for many years, neither for France nor for Europe. For that to happen civilization would have to regress and the Christian religion would have to be destroyed.
>
> Alexis must be careful that he is not accused of having presented a dismal phantasm in order to win acceptance for his democratic ideas. The expression of an orator who wants to move his listeners powerfully can be energetic beyond bounds. That of a writer must always be wise and measured. In all, I would like Alexis to launch out more into the future and apply these last portraits less to the present state.
>
> What Alexis says is true in this sense, that the sovereign of France, like that of Rome, combined in his person a plenitude of powers and authority. He abused them undoubtedly, but not in the same way as the Caesars, nor with the same bloody and ignoble violence. The author could perhaps revise in this sense (YTC, CIIIb, 1, pp. 39–40).
>
> Cf. note e for p. 1249 of the fourth volume.

the level of humanity, wouldn't this be enough to overcome many doubts, reassure many consciences, and prepare each person to make great sacrifices easily?

Shouldn't the gradual development of democratic institutions and mores then be considered, not as the best, but as the sole means that remains for us to be free; and without loving the government of democracy, wouldn't we be disposed to adopt it as the most applicable and most decent remedy that may be opposed to the present ills of society?[h]

It is difficult to make the people participate in government; it is still more difficult to provide them with the experience and give them the sentiments that they lack to govern well.[j]

The will of democracy is changeable; its agents, crude; its laws, imperfect; I grant it. But if it were true that soon no intermediary must exist between the dominion of democracy and the yoke of one man, shouldn't we tend toward the one rather than subject ourselves voluntarily to the other? And if it were necessary finally to arrive at a complete equality, wouldn't it be better to allow ourselves to be leveled by liberty than by a despot?

Those who, after reading this book, would judge that by writing it I wanted to propose the Anglo-American laws and mores for the imitation of all peoples who have a democratic social state would have made a great error; they would be attached to the form, abandoning the very substance of my thought.[k] My goal has been to show, by the example of America,

h. "If the establishment of liberty [v: democracy] was the sole means available to preserve human independence, shouldn't it be followed with order even by those who do not judge it the most desirable?" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 9).

j. "I would like the upper classes and the middle classes of all of Europe to be as persuaded as I am myself that henceforth it is no longer a matter of knowing if the people will come to share power, but in what way they will use their power. That alone is where the great problem of the future is located" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 32).

k. Importance of this fact for Europe.

Irresistible march of democracy.

To regulate it, to instruct it, great problem of the present.

Misfortunes that would result for the human species from not doing so, intolerable despotism, without safeguard. . . . What is happening in America does not show that it can be done, although it does not prove that it must be done in the same way.

that laws and above all mores could allow a democratic people to remain free. I am, moreover, very far from believing that we must follow the example that American democracy has given and imitate the means that it used to attain the goal of its efforts;[m] for I am not unaware of the influence exercised by the nature of the country and antecedent facts on political constitutions, and I would regard it as a great misfortune for humankind if liberty, in all places, had to occur with the same features.[n]

But I think that if we do not manage little by little to introduce and finally to establish democratic institutions among us, and if we abandon giving all citizens the ideas and sentiments that first prepare them for liberty and then allow them the practice of those ideas and sentiments, there will be independence for no one, neither for the bourgeois, nor for the noble,

It is the thought, always present, of this future, *irresistible* that (illegible word) was always present to the author of this book.

I proved well that the physical situation of the Americans without their laws and their mores would not suffice, but I did not prove that their laws and their mores are sufficient without their physical situation (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 110).

m. "What I wanted to say . . . that *mores* and *laws* had more power than the *country.* If that is true, why would we not hope to succeed? Why would we despair of making something stable and lasting?

"I am not saying that we must do as the Americans, but we can arrive at the same result by another path, and their example can provide useful light" (YTC, CVh, 4, p. 11).

n. The paragraph is written this way in the manuscript:

The institutions of the United States are not the only ones that must assure the liberty of men. I am certainly far from believing so. I will admit without difficulty that a nation can remain free without having precisely the same habits and the same ideas as the American people. While retracing the laws and portraying the mores of the American democracy, I have not claimed that all democratic peoples can imitate the first and adopt the second, for I am not unaware of the influence exercised by the nature of the country on its political constitution and I would regard it as a great misfortune for humankind if liberty could only occur under a single form. So I am far from believing that in everything we must imitate the government that American democracy has given itself.

nor for the poor, nor for the rich, but an equal tyranny for all; and I foresee that if we do not succeed over time in establishing among us the peaceful dominion of the greatest number, we will arrive sooner or later at the *unlimited* power of one man.o

o. The question of knowing the name of the one who reigns, even the questions of royalty or republic, capital questions in ordinary times, have only a secondary interest, however, in the extraordinary century in which we live, unless they are attached to another still more vast. The great, the capital interest of the century is the organization and education of democracy.

[In the margin: We must not forget, today it is very much more a matter of the very existence of society than of one form of government rather than another, but it is of civilization as much as of laws [v: to know if we will be free or slave], of human dignity as much as of the prosperity of some, of the fate of three or four hundred million men and not of the destiny of a nation. It is much more about the very history of society . . .]

But that is what we scarcely consider. Placed in the middle of a rapid river, we obstinately fix our eyes on some debris that we still see on the bank, while the torrent carries us away and pushes us backward toward the abyss.

I spoke above about men who were present at the ruin of the Roman empire. Let us fear that the same fate (illegible word) us. This time the barbarians will come not out of the frozen North; they are rising from the heart of our fields and from the very midst of our cities (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 31).

CHAPTER 10

Some Considerations on the Present State and Probable Future of the Three Races That Inhabit the Territory of the United States[a]

The principal task that I had set for myself has now been fulfilled; I have succeeded, at least as much as I could, in showing what the laws of the American democracy were; I have made its mores known. I could stop here, but the reader would perhaps find that I have not satisfied his expectation.

You encounter in America something more than an immense and complete democracy; the peoples who inhabit the New World can be seen from more than one point of view.

In the course of this work, my subject often led me to speak about In-

a. Added at the last moment, this chapter could not be the object of the critical readings by the family, Kergorlay, or Beaumont. It is not easy to date its composition in a precise way, but many indications lead to the idea that it was written during the spring or summer of 1834. On the 15th of August of that year, his manuscript under his arm, Tocqueville arrived at the chateau de Gallarande, in the Sarthe, invited by Madame Eugénie de Sarce, sister of Gustave de Beaumont. He remained with the Beaumonts until the middle of September. In July, Tocqueville had written to Beaumont to confide in him that he did not believe that Gosselin had read the manuscript and to ask his help on the titles of chapters, which indicates that the manuscript sent to Gosselin did not then constitute the definitive text.

In this chapter, the similarity to the ideas of Beaumont on the Indians and Blacks is clear. It consists not only of the consideration of identical questions; it even touches on sources and citations. Did Beaumont persuade Tocqueville to treat a question that, in the beginning, belonged to *Marie?* Does Tocqueville's decision have something to do with the racial problems that broke out on the East coast of the United States during the summer of 1834? Did Tocqueville review and correct this chapter while with the Beaumont family at the end of the summer? The manuscript of the chapter does not present great differences from the published version and the number of drafts, appreciably less than that for other chapters, attests to a rapid composition.

dians and Negroes, but I never had the time to stop to show what position these two races occupy in the midst of the democratic people that I was busy portraying; I said according to what spirit, with the aid of what laws, the Anglo-American confederation had been formed; I could only indicate in passing, and in a very incomplete way, the dangers that menace this confederation, and it was impossible for me to explain in detail what its chances of enduring were, apart from laws and mores. While speaking about the united republics, I hazarded no conjecture about the permanence of republican forms in the New World, and although alluding frequently to the commercial activity that reigns in the Union, I was not able to deal with the future of the Americans as a commercial people.

These topics touch on my subject, but do not enter into it; they are American without being democratic, and above all I wanted to portray democracy. So I had to put them aside at first; but I must return to them as I finish.[b]

The territory occupied today, or claimed by the American Union, extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the shores of the Pacific Ocean. So in the east or in the west, its limits are those of the continent itself; the territory advances in the south to the edge of the Tropics and then goes back up to the middle of the frozen areas of the North.

The men spread throughout this space do not form, as in Europe, so many offshoots of the same family. You discover among them, from the outset, three naturally distinct and, I could almost say, enemy races. Education, laws, origins and even the external form of their features, have raised an almost insurmountable barrier between them; fortune gathered them together on the same soil, but it mixed them together without being able to blend them, and each one pursues its destiny apart.

Among such diverse men, the first who attracts attention, the first in enlightenment, in power, in happiness, is the white man, the European, man *par excellence;*[c] below him appear the Negro and the Indian.

b. In a draft the paragraph continues in this way: "I am still going to talk about America, but no more about democracy" (YTC, CVh, 3, p. 33).

c. In another version: "{To him belongs the most beautiful portion of the future. Why this unequal sharing of the good things of this world? Who can say?}"

These two unfortunate races have neither birth, nor facial features, nor language, nor mores in common; their misfortunes alone are similar. Both occupy an equally inferior position in the country that they inhabit; both suffer the effects of tyranny; and if their miseries are different, they can blame the same authors for them.

Wouldn't you say, seeing what is happening in the world, that the European is to the men of other races what man himself is to the animals? He makes them serve his purposes, and when he cannot make them bend, he destroys them.[d]

Oppression deprived the descendants of the Africans at a stroke of nearly all the privileges of humanity. The Negro of the United States has lost even the memory of his country; he no longer hears the language spoken by his fathers; he has renounced their religion and forgotten their mores. While thus ceasing to belong to Africa, however, he has acquired no right to the good things of Europe; but he has stopped between the two societies; he has remained isolated between the two peoples; sold by the one and repudiated by the other; finding in the whole world only the home of his master to offer him the incomplete picture of a native land.

The Negro has no family; he cannot see in a woman anything other than the temporary companion of his pleasures and, at birth, his sons are his equals.

Shall I call it a benefit of God or a final curse of His anger, this disposition of the soul that makes man insensible to extreme miseries and often even gives him a kind of depraved taste for the cause of his misfortunes?

Plunged into this abyss of evils, the Negro scarcely feels his misfortune; violence had placed him in slavery; the practice of servitude has given him the thoughts and ambition of a slave; he admires his tyrants even more than he hates them, and finds his joy and his pride in servile imitation of those who oppress him.

His intelligence has fallen to the level of his soul.

The Negro enters into servitude and into life at the same time. What

d. To the side of a first version: "≠Why of these three races, is one born to perish, the other to rule and the last to serve?≠"

am I saying? Often he is purchased right from the womb of his mother, and so to speak he starts to be a slave before being born.

Without need as without pleasure, useless to himself, he understands, by the first notions that he receives of existence, that he is the property of another, whose interest is to watch over his days; he sees that the care for his own fate has not devolved upon him. The very use of thought seems to him a useless gift from Providence, and he peacefully enjoys all the privileges of his servility.

If he becomes free, independence often then seems to him to be a heavier chain than slavery itself; for in the course of his existence, he has learned to submit to everything, except to reason; and when reason becomes his sole guide, he cannot recognize its voice. A thousand new needs besiege him, and he lacks the knowledge and the energy necessary to resist them. Needs are masters that must be fought, and he has only learned to submit and to obey. So he has reached this depth of misery in which servitude brutalizes him and liberty destroys him.

Oppression has exercised no less influence over the Indian races, but its effects are different.

[≠Europeans have introduced some new needs and some unknown vices among the savages of North America; but they have not been able entirely to modify the character of these savage bands. Europeans have been able to make their tribes disappear, to invade [v: to take the land away from them] their native land, but they have never submitted to the Europeans. Some have evaded servitude by flight, others by death.≠]

Before the arrival of whites in the New World, the men who inhabited North America lived tranquilly in the woods. Given over to the ordinary vicissitudes of savage life, they exhibited the vices and virtues of uncivilized peoples.[*] Europeans, after scattering the Indian tribes far into the wilderness, condemned them to a wandering and restless life, full of inexpressible miseries.

[*]. See on the history, the mores of the natives of America before the arrival of the Europeans and on the philosophy of their languages the very curious research of R. Heckewelder, Duponceau . . . , contained in the first volume of the transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1819. Say what [two illegible words] Cooper drew from him.

Savage nations are governed only by opinions and mores.

By weakening the sentiment of native land among the Indians of North America, by scattering their families, by obscuring their traditions, by interrupting the chain of memory, by changing all their habits, and by increasing their needs inordinately, European tyranny has made them more disorderly and less civilized than they already were. The moral condition and physical state of these peoples did not cease to deteriorate at the same time, and they became more barbaric as they became more unhappy. Nonetheless, Europeans have not been able entirely to modify the character of the Indians, and with the power to destroy them, they have never had that of civilizing and subjugating them.

The Negro is placed at the furthest limits of servitude; the Indian, at the extreme limits of liberty. The effects of slavery on the first are scarcely more harmful than the effects of independence on the second.

The Negro has lost even ownership of his person, and he cannot dispose of his own existence without committing a kind of larceny.

The savage is left to himself as soon as he can act. He has hardly known the authority of family; he has never bent his will to that of his fellows; no one has taught him to distinguish a voluntary obedience from a shameful subjection, and he is unaware of even the name of law. For him, to be free is to escape nearly all the bonds of society. He delights in this barbarous independence, and he would prefer to perish rather than to sacrifice the smallest part of it. Civilization has little hold over such a man.

The Negro makes a thousand hapless efforts in order to enter into a society that pushes him away; he bows to the tastes of his oppressors, adopts their opinions, and aspires, by imitating them, to be mingled with them. He has been told since birth that his race is naturally inferior to that of the whites and he is not far from believing it; so he is ashamed of himself. In each one of his features he finds a mark of slavery and, if he could, he would joyfully consent to repudiate himself completely.

The Indian, in contrast, has an imagination entirely filled with the alleged nobility of his origin. He lives and dies amid these dreams of his pride.[e] Far

e. In the margin: "≠He perishes by the exaggeration of the sentiments that the first one lacks.≠"

from wanting to bend his mores to ours, he is attached to barbarism as a distinctive sign of his race, and he rejects civilization perhaps still less out of hatred for it than out of fear of resembling the Europeans.[1]

To the perfection of our arts, he wants to oppose only the resources of the wilderness; to our tactics, only his undisciplined courage; to the depth of our plans, only the spontaneous instincts of his savage nature. He succumbs in this unequal struggle.[g]

The Negro would like to mingle with the European, and he cannot do so. The Indian could, to a certain point, succeed in doing so, but he disdains to try. The servility of the one delivers him to slavery, and the pride of the other, to death.

I remember that traveling through the forests that still cover the state of

1. *The native of North America keeps his opinions and even the smallest detail of his habits with an inflexibility that is without example in history. During the more than two hundred years that the wandering tribes of North America have had daily connections with the white race, they have borrowed so to speak neither an idea nor a custom. The men of Europe have, however, exercised a very great influence over the savages. They have made the Indian character more disordered, but they have not made it more European. Finding myself in the summer of 1831 beyond Lake Michigan, in the place named Green-Bay, which serves as the extreme frontier of the United States with the Indians of the Northwest, I met an American officer, Major H., who, one day, after talking to me a great deal about the inflexibility of the Indian character, told me about the following event:*

> *"I once knew," he says to me, "a young Indian who had been raised in a college in New England. He had been very successful there, and had taken the full external appearance of a civilized man. When war broke out between us and the English in 1810,*[f] *I saw this young man again; he was then serving in our army, at the head of some warriors of his tribe. The Americans had allowed Indians in their ranks only on the condition that they abstained from the horrible custom of scalping the defeated. The evening of the battle of ***, C. . . came to sit down close to the fire of our bivouac; I asked him what had happened to him during the day; he told me, and gradually growing excited with the memory of his exploits, he ended by half-opening his jacket while saying:—'Don't betray me, but see!' In fact I saw," added Major H., "between his body and his shirt, the scalp of an Englishman still dripping with blood."*

f. It certainly concerns the War of 1812. The person Tocqueville was speaking to was Major Lamard (non-alphabetic notebook 1, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 75–78).

g. To the side: "≠The Negro by being a slave loses the taste for and the possibility of being free; the Indian by being free becomes incapable of becoming civilized. The one cannot learn to be free; the other, to put limits on his liberty.≠"

Alabama, I arrived one day next to the cabin of a pioneer. I did not want to enter the dwelling of the American, but I went to rest for a few moments at the edge of a spring not far from there in the woods. While I was in this place, an Indian woman came (we then were near the territory occupied by the Creek nation); she held the hand of a small girl five or six years old, belonging to the white race, whom I supposed to be the daughter of the pioneer. A Negro woman followed them. A kind of barbaric luxury distinguished the costume of the Indian woman: metal rings were suspended from her nostrils and ears; her hair, mixed with glass beads, fell freely over her shoulders, and I saw that she wasn't married, for she still wore the shell necklace that virgins customarily put down on the nuptial bed. The Negro woman was dressed in European clothes almost in tatters.

All three came to sit down beside the spring, and the young savage, taking the child in her arms, lavished on her caresses that you could have believed were dictated by a mother's heart; on her side, the Negro woman sought by a thousand innocent tricks to attract the attention of the small Creole. The latter showed in her slightest movements a sentiment of superiority that contrasted strangely with her weakness and her age; you would have said that she received the attentions of her companions with a kind of condescension.

Squatting in front of her mistress, watching closely for each of her desires, the Negro woman seemed equally divided between an almost maternal attachment and a servile fear; while a free, proud, and almost fierce air distinguished even the savage woman's effusion of tenderness.

I approached and contemplated this spectacle in silence; my curiosity undoubtedly displeased the Indian woman, for she suddenly arose, pushed the child far away from her with a kind of roughness, and, after giving me an irritated look, plunged into the woods.

I had often happened to see gathered in the same places individuals belonging to the three human races that people North America. I had already recognized by a thousand various effects the preponderance exercised by the whites. But, in the scene that I have just described, there was something particularly touching: a bond of affection united the oppressed to the oppressors here, and nature, by trying hard to bring them together, made still more striking the immense space put between them by prejudice and laws.

Present State and Probable Future of the Indian Tribes That Inhabit the Territory Possessed by the Union[h]

Gradual disappearance of the native races.—How it is taking place.—Miseries that accompany the forced migrations of the Indians.—The savages of North America had only two means to escape destruction: war or civilization.—They can no longer wage war.—Why they do not want to become civilized when they could do so, and, when they reach the point of wanting to do so, they no longer can.—Example of the Creeks and the Cherokees.—Policy of the particular states toward these Indians.—Policy of the federal government.

All the Indian tribes that formerly inhabited the territory of New England, the Narragansetts, the Mohicans, the Pequots no longer live except in the

h. Detached note in the manuscript:

Plan of the chapter.
1. Destruction of the Indians, *a fact.*
2. How it is taking place.
You make the wild game flee. You buy the land. (Here introduce commercial mores.)
3. Inevitable destruction.
1. War or civilization.
War, they can no longer wage it.
2. Civilization remains.
Difficulty that hunting peoples have in becoming civilized. It would be necessary to have [in advance (?) (ed.)] to become a farmer.
Idleness and *pride* that prevent them from wanting to do so.
When they want to do so, they are not longer able (here I placed the *half-breeds,* perhaps elsewhere). Effects of an incomplete civilization in contact with a complete one.
What precedes is an imperceptible and so to speak involuntary action of one race on another, but often the positive and voluntary action of governments is joined with it. Cherokees, Creeks, way of acting toward them of the state and federal governments.

The appendix devoted to the Indians in the second volume of *Marie* ("Note on the past state and the present condition of the Indian tribes of North America") gives interesting details on their way of life and their habits that do not appear in Tocqueville's work.

See Harry Liebersohn, *Aristocratic Encounters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 92–112.

memory of men; the Lenapes [Delawares] who received Penn, one hundred and fifty years ago, on the banks of the Delaware, have disappeared today.[j] I met the last of the Iroquois; they were begging. All the nations that I have just named formerly extended as far as the shores of the sea; now you must go more than one hundred leagues into the interior of the continent to meet an Indian. These savages have not only withdrawn, they are destroyed.[2] As the natives move away and die, an immense people comes and increases continuously in their place. Neither a development so prodigious nor a destruction so rapid has ever been seen among nations.

It is easy to indicate the manner in which this destruction is taking place.

When the Indians lived alone in the wilderness from which they are exiled today, their needs were few [and the means to provide for them very numerous]; they made their own arms; river water was their only drink; and they had as clothing the hide of the animals whose flesh served to nourish them.

Europeans introduced to the natives of North America firearms, iron and brandy; they taught them to replace with our fabrics the barbarian clothing that contented Indian simplicity until then. While contracting new tastes, the Indians have not learned the art of satisfying them, and they have had to resort to the industry of whites. In return for these goods, which he himself did not know how to create, the savage could offer nothing, other than the rich furs that his woods still contained. From this moment, the hunt had to provide not only for his needs, but also for the frivolous passions of Europe. He no longer pursued the beasts of the forest only to

j. On a loose slip of paper in the manuscript: "Present state of the relations of the United States with all the Indians who surround their territory. See report of the Secretary of War, L. Cass, 29 November 1833. *National Intelligencer* of 10 December 1833." Beaumont had subscribed to the *National Intelligencer* in 1833. Tocqueville drew from this newspaper many details for writing this chapter.

2. *In the thirteen original states, only 6,273 Indians remain. (See Legislative Documents, 20th Congress, n. 117, p. 90).*

nourish himself, but to obtain the only objects of exchange that he could give us.[3]

While the needs of the natives grew in this way, their resources did not cease to diminish.

From the day when a European settlement forms in the neighborhood of the territory occupied by the Indians, the wild game becomes alarmed.[4] Thousands of savages, wandering in the forests, without fixed abodes, do not frighten the game; but the instant the continuous noises of European industry are heard in some place, the game begins to flee and to withdraw toward the west, where its instinct teaches it that still limitless wildernesses will be found. "But the buffalo is constantly receding," say Messrs. Cass and Clark in their report to Congress, 4 February 1829. "A few years since,

3. *Messrs. Clark and Cass, in their report to Congress, 4 February 1829, p. 23, said:*

The time is already long past when the Indians could supply themselves with the things necessary for their food and clothing without resorting to the industry of civilized men. Beyond the Mississippi, in a country where immense herds of buffalo are still found, live Indian tribes that follow the migrations of these wild animals; the Indians that we are speaking about still find the means to live by following all the customs of their fathers; but the buffalo are constantly withdrawing. Now you can no longer get, except with rifles or traps, the smaller type of wild animals, such as bear, deer, beaver, muskrat, that particularly provide the Indians with what is necessary to sustain life.

It is principally in the northwest that the Indians are forced to expend excessive effort to nourish their families. Often the hunter devotes several days in a row to pursuing game without success; during this time, his family must eat bark and roots or perish; consequently many of them die of hunger every winter.[k]

The Indians do not want to live like the Europeans; they cannot do without the Europeans, however, nor live entirely as their fathers did. You will judge so by this sole fact, the knowledge of which I draw as well from an official source. Some men belonging to an Indian tribe on the shores of Lake Superior had killed a European; the American government forbid trading with the tribe of which the guilty parties were part, until they had been surrendered: which took place.

k. This citation is also found in *Marie,* II, pp. 291–92.

4. *"Five years ago," says Volney in his* Tableau des Etats-Unis, *p. 370, "while going from Vincennes to Kaskaskia, territory included today in the state of Illinois, then entirely wild (1797), you did not cross the prairies without seeing herds of four to five hundred buffaloes; today none of them remain; they crossed the Mississippi by swimming, bothered by hunters and above all by the bells of American cows."*

they approached the base of the Alleghany, and a few years hence they may even be rare upon the immense plains which extend to the base of the Rocky Mountains." I was assured that this effect of the approach of whites [{Europeans}] often makes itself felt two hundred leagues from their frontier. Their influence is exercised therefore on tribes whose name they hardly know and who suffer the evils of usurpation long before knowing the authors of it.[5]

Soon hardy adventurers penetrate the Indian countries; they advance fifteen or twenty leagues beyond the extreme frontier of the whites and go to build the dwelling of civilized man in the very midst of barbarism. It is easy for them to do so: the limits of the territory of a hunting people are poorly fixed. This territory belongs, moreover, to the entire nation and is not precisely the property of anyone; so individual interest defends no part of it.[m]

A few European families, occupying widely separated points, then succeed in chasing forever the wild animals from all the intermediate space that stretches between them. The Indians, who had lived until then in a sort of abundance, find it difficult to survive, still more difficult to obtain the objects of exchange that they need. By making their game flee, it is as if you made the fields of our farmers sterile. Soon they almost entirely lack the means of existence. You then meet these unfortunate people prowling about like famished wolves amid their deserted woods. Instinctive love of native land attaches them to the soil where they were born,[6] and they no

5. *You can be persuaded of the truth of what I am advancing here by consulting the general portrait of the Indian tribes contained within the limits claimed by the United States (*Legislative Documents, *20th Congress, n. 117, pp. 90–105). You will see that the tribes in the center of America are rapidly decreasing, although the Europeans are still very far from them.*

m. An identical sentence can be found in *Marie* (II, p. 233).

6. *The Indians, say Messrs. Clark and Cass in their report to Congress, p. 15, are attached to their country by the same sentiment of affection that ties us to ours; and furthermore, to the idea of alienating the lands that the Great Spirit gave to their ancestors, they attach certain superstitious ideas that exercise a great power over the tribes that have still not given anything up or who have given up only a small portion of their territory to Europeans. "We do not sell the place where the remains of our fathers rest," such is the first response that they always make to whoever proposes to buy their lands.*

longer find anything there except misery and death. They finally make up their minds; they leave, and following at a distance the flight of the elk, the buffalo and the beaver, they leave to these wild animals the care of choosing a new homeland for them. So it is not, strictly speaking, the Europeans[n] who chase the natives of America away, it is famine; happy distinction that had escaped the old casuists and that modern [{Protestant}] doctors have discovered.

You cannot imagine the dreadful evils that accompany these forced emigrations. At the moment when the Indians left their paternal lands, they were already exhausted and reduced. The country where they are going to settle is occupied by wandering tribes who see the new arrivals only with jealousy. Behind them is hunger, ahead of them is war, everywhere there is misery. In order to escape so many enemies, they divide up. Each one of them tries to isolate himself in order to find furtively the means to sustain his existence, and lives in the immensity of the wilderness like the outlaw in the bosom of civilized societies. The social bond, long weakened, then breaks. For them, there already was no longer a native land. Soon there will no longer be a people; families will scarcely remain; the common name is being lost, language forgotten, the traces of origin disappear. The nation has ceased to exist. It scarcely lives in the memory of American antiquarians and is known only to a few European scholars.

I would not want the reader to be able to believe that I am exaggerating my descriptions here.[o] I have seen with my own eyes several of the miseries that I have just described; I have gazed upon evils that would be impossible for me to recount.

At the end of the year 1831, I found myself on the left bank of the Mississippi, at a place named Memphis by the Europeans. While I was in this place, a numerous troop of Choctaws (the French of Louisiana call them *Chactas*) came; these savages left their country and tried to pass to the right bank of the Mississippi where they flattered themselves about finding a refuge that the American government had promised them. It was then the

n. If the word *European* is kept here, in most cases it has been crossed out and *Anglo-Americans* substituted.

o. In the manuscript: "that I am inventing [v: creating] descriptions at will here."

heart of winter, and the cold gripped that year with unaccustomed intensity; snow had hardened on the ground, and the river swept along enormous chunks of ice. The Indians led their families with them; they dragged along behind them the wounded, the sick, the newborn children, the elderly about to die. They had neither tents nor wagons, but only a few provisions and weapons. I saw them embark to cross the great river, and this solemn spectacle will never leave my memory. You heard among this assembled crowd neither sobs nor complaints; they kept quiet. Their misfortunes were old and seemed to them without remedy. All the Indians had already entered the vessel that was to carry them; their dogs still remained on the bank; when these animals saw finally that their masters were going away forever, they let out dreadful howls, and throwing themselves at the same time into the icy waters of the Mississippi, they swam after their masters.

The dispossession of the Indians often takes place today in a regular and, so to speak, entirely legal manner.

When the European population begins to approach the wilderness occupied by a savage nation, the government of the United States commonly sends to the latter a solemn embassy. The whites assemble the Indians in a great field and, after eating and drinking with them, say to them:

> What are you doing in the land of your fathers? Soon you will have to dig up their bones to live there. How is the country where you live better than another? Are there woods, marshes and prairies only here where you are, and can you live only under your sun? Beyond these mountains that you see on the horizon, beyond the lake that borders your territory on the west, you find vast countries where wild game is still found in abundance; sell us your lands and go to live happily in those places.

After giving this speech, firearms, woolen clothing, casks of brandy, glass necklaces, tin bracelets, earrings and mirrors are spread out before the eyes of the Indians.[7] If, at the sight of all these riches, they still hesitate, it is

7. *See in the* Legislative Documents of Congress, *doc. 117, the account of what happens in these circumstances. This curious piece is found in the report already cited, made*

insinuated that they cannot refuse the consent demanded of them, and that soon the government itself will be unable to guarantee to them the enjoyment of their rights.[*] What to do? Half persuaded, half forced, the Indians move away; they go to inhabit new wildernesses where whites will not leave them in peace for even ten years. In this way the Americans acquire at a very low price entire provinces that the richest sovereigns of Europe could not afford.[8]

by Messrs. Clark and Lewis Cass, to Congress, 4 February 1829. Today Mr. Cass is the Secretary of War.

> *The Indians, as has been stated, say* Messrs. Clark and Cass, *reach the treaty ground poor, and almost naked. Large quantities of goods are taken there by the traders, and are seen and examined by the Indians. The women and children become importunate to have their wants supplied, and their influence is soon exerted to induce a sale. Their improvidence is habitual and unconquerable. The gratification of his immediate wants and desires is the ruling passion of an Indian. The expectation of future advantages seldom produces much effect. The experience of the past is lost, and the prospects of the future disregarded. This is one of the most striking traits in their character, and is well known to all who have had much intercourse with them. It would be utterly hopeless to demand a cession of land, unless the means were at hand of gratifying their immediate wants; and when their condition and circumstances are fairly considered, it ought not to surprise us that they are so anxious to relieve themselves.*

[*]. See the treaty with the Osages. Everett, p. 16. *Long's Expedition,* vol. II, p. 245.

8. *On 19 May 1830, Mr. Ed. Everett asserted before the House of Representatives that the Americans had already acquired by* treaty, *east and west of the Mississippi, 230,000,000 acres.*

In 1808, the Osages gave up 48,000,000 acres for an income of 1,000 dollars.

In 1818, the Quapaws gave up 29,000,000 acres for 4,000 dollars; they reserved a territory of 1,000,000 acres for hunting. It had been solemnly sworn that it would be respected; it was not long before it was invaded like the rest.

> *In order to appropriate the uninhabited lands to which the Indians claim ownership, said Mr. Bell, secretary of the Indian affairs committee of Congress, 24 February 1830, we have adopted the practice of paying the Indian tribes the value of their hunting ground after the game has fled or has been destroyed. It is more advantageous and certainly more in conformity with the principles of justice and more humane to act in this way than to take the territory of the savages by force of arms.*
>
> *The practice of buying from the Indians their title of ownership is therefore nothing more than a new mode of acquisition that humanity and expediency have substituted for violence, and that will equally make us masters of the lands that we claim by virtue of*

I have just recounted great evils, I add that they seem irremediable to me. I believe that the Indian race of North America is condemned to perish, and I cannot prevent myself from thinking that the day the Europeans settle on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, that race will have ceased to exist.[9]

The Indians of North America had only two paths to salvation: war or civilization; in other words, they had to destroy the Europeans or become their equal.

At the birth of the colonies, it would have been possible for them, by uniting their forces, to rid themselves of the small number of foreigners who had just arrived at the shores of the continent.[10] More than once, they attempted to do it and saw themselves on the verge of success. Today the disproportion of resources is too great for them to be able to consider such an undertaking.[p] But men of genius still arise among the Indian nations, who foresee the final fate reserved for the savage populations and who seek to bring together all the tribes in a common hatred of Europeans [{and to silence individual animosities in order to deal only with this objective [v:

discovery, and that moreover assures us the right of civilized nations to settle the territory occupied by savage tribes.

Until now, several causes have constantly diminished in the eyes of the Indians the value of the soil that they occupy, and then the same causes have led them to sell it to us without difficulty. The practice of buying from the savages their right of occupancy *has therefore never been able, to any perceptible degree, to slow the prosperity of the United States.*

(Legislative Documents, *21st Congress, n. 227, p. 6).*

9. *This opinion seemed to us, moreover, that of nearly all the American statesmen.*

"Judging of the future by the past," said Mr. Cass to Congress, "we cannot err in anticipating a progressive diminution of their numbers, and their eventual extinction, unless our border should become stationary, and they be removed beyond it, or unless some radical change should take place in [the principles of (ed.)] *our intercourse with them, which it is easier to hope for than to expect."*

10. *See among others the war undertaken by the Wampanoags and the other confederated tribes, under the leadership of Metacom* [King Philip (ed.)], *in 1675, against the colonists of New England, and the war that the English had to withstand in 1622 in Virginia.*

p. According to Beaumont, the only possibility rested on an alliance of Indians with the Black population. Nonetheless, in his novel, this alliance and the revolt that follows lead to a sharp defeat.

to consider all saving themselves}];[*] but their efforts are ineffectual. The tribes that are near the whites are already too weak to offer effective resistance; the others, abandoning themselves to this childish lack of concern about tomorrow that characterizes savage nature, wait for the danger to appear before giving it their attention. The first cannot act, the others do not want to act.

[≠If at the same time that the Indians gave up hope of chasing the Europeans away from American soil, they had succeeded in becoming civilized, they would still be able to avoid the destruction that threatens them, for it is nearly impossible to dispossess a farming people completely.≠]

It is easy to foresee that the Indians will never want to become civilized, or that they will try too late, when they reach the point of wanting to do so.

Civilization is the result of a long work of society that proceeds in the same place and that the different successive generations bequeath to one another. It is among hunting peoples that civilization has the greatest difficulty managing to establish its dominion. Tribes of herders change places, but they always follow a regular order in their migrations and constantly retrace their steps; the dwelling-place of hunters varies like that of the very animals they pursue.

Several times the attempt has been made to bring enlightenment to the Indians while leaving them with the mores of wandering peoples; the Jesuits had tried to do it in Canada, the Puritans in New England.[11] Both accomplished nothing lasting. Civilization was born within the hut and went to die in the woods. The great failing of these legislators of the Indians was not to understand that, to succeed in civilizing a people, it is necessary

[*]. Red Jacket.[q] Cite and translate the speech of Oconostata in Everett, p. 44. Insert afterward the note from the work.

q. John C. Spencer, on the occasion of a long conversation, provided Tocqueville with information on Red Jacket (alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 221–23). Edward Everett, for his part, had sent Beaumont several documents on the Indians, including his speech of 1830 to the House of Representatives. Cf. two letters from Beaumont to Edward Everett dated 18 February and 1 May 1832, YTC, BIc.

11. *See the different historians of New England. Also see* Histoire de la Nouvelle-France *by Charlevoix and* Lettres édifiantes. *[See report of the Commission of Indian Affairs, 21st Congress, n. 217, p. 25.]*

above all to get them to settle down, and they can only do so by cultivating the soil; so it was first a matter of making the Indians farmers.

Not only do the Indians not possess this indispensable preliminary of civilization, but also it is very difficult for them to acquire.

Men who have once given themselves over to the idle and adventurous life of hunters feel an almost insurmountable distaste for the constant and regular work required by farming. You can see it even within our societies; but it is even much more visible among peoples for whom hunting habits have become the national customs.

Apart from this general cause, a cause no less powerful is found only among the Indians. I have already pointed it out; I believe I must return to it.

The natives of North America consider work not only as an evil, but also as a dishonor, and their pride struggles against civilization almost as obstinately as their idleness.[12]

There is no Indian so miserable who, in his bark hut, does not maintain a proud idea of his individual value; he considers the cares of industry as degrading occupations; he compares the farmer to the ox that traces the furrow, and in each of our arts he sees only the work of slaves. It is not that he has not conceived a very high idea of the power of whites and of the grandeur of their intelligence; but, if he admires the result of our efforts, he scorns the means that we have used to obtain them, and, even while under our influence, he still believes himself superior to us. Hunting and war seem to him the only cares worthy of a man.[13] So the Indian, deep

12. *"In all the tribes," says Volney in his* Tableau des Etats-Unis, *p. 423, "there still exists a generation of old warriors who, seeing the hoe handled, do not cease to shout about the degradation of ancient mores and who claim that the savages owe their decline only to these innovations, and that, to recover their glory and their power, it would be sufficient for them to return to their primitive mores."*

13. *In an official document the following portrait is found:*

> *Until a young man has been engaged with an enemy, and can boast of his prowess, he is held in no estimation, and is considered little better than a woman.*
>
> *At their great war dances, all the warriors in succession strike the post, as it is called, and recount the feats they have done. The auditory, upon these occasions, is composed of the relations, the friends, and the companions of the narrator, and the intensity of their*

within the misery of his woods, nurtures the same ideas, the same opinions as the noble[*] of the Middle Ages in his fortress, and to resemble him fully he only needs to become a conqueror. How strange! It is in the forests of the New World, and not among the Europeans who populate its shores, that the ancient prejudices of Europe are found today.

I have tried more than once, in the course of this work, to make understood the prodigious influence that the social state seemed to me to exercise on the laws and mores of men. Allow me to add a single word to the subject.

When I notice the similarity that exists between the political institutions of our fathers, the Teutons, and those of the wandering tribes of North America, between the customs recounted by Tacitus and those that I was sometimes able to witness, I cannot prevent myself from thinking that the same cause has produced, in the two hemispheres, the same results, and that amid the apparent diversity of human affairs, it is not impossible to find a small number of generative facts from which all the others derive. So in all that we call Teutonic institutions, I am tempted to see only the habits of barbarians, and the opinions of savages in what we call feudal ideas.[r]

feelings is manifested by the deep silence with which they listen to his tale, and by the loud shouts with which he is hailed at the termination. Unfortunate is the young man who has no deeds of valor to recount at these assemblages; and instances are not wanting, where young warriors, in the excitement of their feelings, have departed alone from these dances, in search of trophies to exhibit, and of adventures to relate.

[*]. See the piece from Cass and Clark, p. 29, on the need for military glory that makes itself universally felt among them.

r. In the second lecture of his *History of Civilization in Europe,* Guizot asserted that the savage life of the American Indians had some similarity to the mores of the ancient Teutons. He added that the idea of individual independence, that of modern personal liberty, had appeared in Europe on the occasion of the great Teutonic invasions. The same ideas are found, more developed, in the seventh lecture of the course on civilization in France. Montesquieu, Saint-Simon and Boulainvilliers, before Guizot, had shown a great admiration for Teutonic institutions.

Whatever the vices and prejudices that prevent the Indians of North America from becoming farmers and civilized, necessity sometimes forces them to do so.

Several considerable nations of the South, among others those of the Cherokees and the Creeks,[14] found themselves as though encircled by Europeans who, landing on the shores of the Ocean, going down the Ohio and coming back up the Mississippi, surrounded them all at once. They were not chased from place to place, as the tribes of the North were, but were squeezed little by little into limits that were too narrow, as hunters first make an enclosure around a thicket before entering simultaneously into the interior. The Indians, placed then between civilization and death, saw themselves reduced to living shamefully by their work like whites; so they became farmers, and without entirely abandoning either their habits or their mores, they sacrificed what was absolutely necessary for their existence.

The Cherokees went further; they created a written language, established a fairly stable form of government; and, as everything moves with a hurried step in the New World, they had a newspaper[15] before all had clothes.

What singularly favored the rapid development of European habits among these Indians was the presence of half-breeds.[16] Sharing the enlightenment of his father without necessarily abandoning the savage customs

14. *These nations today are encompassed in the states of Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi.*

There were formerly in the south (you see the remnants of them) four great nations: the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks and Cherokees.

The remnants of these four nations still had about 75,000 individuals in 1830. There is at present, in the territory occupied or claimed by the Anglo-American Union, a count of about 300,000 Indians. (See Proceedings of the Indian Board in the City of New York. *) Official documents provided to Congress bring the number to 313,130. The reader curious to know the name and strength of all the tribes that inhabit the Anglo-American territory should consult the documents that I have just indicated. (*Legislative Documents, *20th Congress, n. 117, pp. 90–105.)*

15. *I brought back to France one or two copies of this singular publication. [Cite the statistical details that are found in the speech of Everett, p. 26. See* id., *p. 29.]*

16. *See in the report of the committee of Indian affairs, 21st Congress, n. 227, p. 23, what makes the half-breeds multiply among the Cherokees; the principal cause goes back to the War of Independence. Many Anglo-Americans from Georgia, having taken England's side, were forced to withdraw among the Indians and married there.*

of his maternal race, the half-breed forms the natural link between civilization and barbarism. Wherever half-breeds have multiplied, savages are seen to modify little by little their social state and change their mores.[17]

So the success of the Cherokees proves that the Indians have the ability to become civilized, but it in no way proves that they can succeed in doing so.[s]

This difficulty that the Indians find in submitting to civilization arises from a general cause that is nearly impossible for them to elude.

17. *Unfortunately half-breeds have been fewer and have exercised a smaller influence in North America than anywhere else.*

Two great nations of Europe peopled this portion of the American continent: the French and the English.

The first did not take long to enter into unions with the young native women; but misfortune decreed that a secret affinity be found between the Indian character and theirs. Instead of giving to the barbarians the taste and habits of civilized life, it was they who often became passionately attached to savage life; they became the most dangerous inhabitants of the wilderness, and won the friendship of the Indian by exaggerating his vices and his virtues. M. de Sénonville [Denonville (ed.)], Governor of Canada, wrote to Louis XIV, in 1685: "For a long time we believed it necessary to move the savages near us to make them more French; we all have good grounds to recognize that we were wrong. Those who moved near us did not become French, and the French who haunted them became savage. They pretend to dress like them, to live like them" (Histoire de la Nouvelle-France, *by Charlevoix, vol. II, p. 345).*

The Englishman, in contrast, living stubbornly attached to the opinions, the customs and to the slightest habits of his fathers, remained in the middle of the American wilderness what he was within the cities of Europe; so he wanted to establish no contact with the savages that he despised, and carefully avoided mingling his blood with that of the barbarians.

Thus, while the Frenchman exercised no salutary influence on the Indians, the Englishman was always a stranger to them.

s. Note on a small sheet of paper separate from the manuscript, but which, according to Tocqueville's indications, should have been placed here:

> I recall having been very surprised in the middle of the woods by hearing savages shout to me: *bonjour* with an air of friendship. This attachment of the Indians to the [lacking: *French* (ed.)] is due in part to very honorable causes: "If we pay attention," say Messrs. Clark and Cass in their report to Congress, doc. n. 117, p. 11, "to the influence acquired and exercised by the French on the Indians, influence whose visible traces you still see today after two generations have passed, you will be led to conclude that the French used their power with honor and impartiality."

The attraction of savage life for Europeans and the scorn of savage populations for civilization appear in the *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* of Rousseau (*Oeuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, III, note XVI, pp. 220–21).

If you cast an attentive eye on history, you discover that in general barbaric peoples have risen little by little by themselves, and by their own efforts, toward civilization.

When it happened that they went to draw enlightenment from a foreign nation, they did so with the rank of conquerors, and not the position of the vanquished.

When the conquered people are enlightened and the conquering people half-savage, as in the invasion of the Roman Empire by the nations of the North, or in that of China by the Mongols, the power that victory assures to the barbarian is enough to keep him at the level of the civilized man and allow him to move as his equal, until he becomes his equal; the one has strength in his favor, the other, intelligence; the first admires the arts and sciences of the vanquished, the second envies the power of the conquerors. The barbarians end by introducing the civilized man into their palaces, and the civilized man in turn opens his schools to them. But when the one who possesses physical force enjoys intellectual preponderance at the same time, it is rare for the vanquished to become civilized; he withdraws or is destroyed.

Therefore you can say in a general way that savages are going to seek enlightenment with weapons in hand, but that they do not receive it.[t]

If the Indian tribes who now inhabit the center of the continent could find in themselves enough energy to undertake becoming civilized, they would perhaps succeed. Superior then to the barbarian nations that surround them, they would little by little gain strength and experience, and, when the Europeans finally appeared on their frontiers, they would be in a state, if not to maintain their independence, at least to make their rights to the soil recognized and to become integrated with the conquerors. But the misfortune of the Indians is to enter into contact with the most civi-

t. In the margin, in a first version:

≠It is sufficient to see the natives of North America to be persuaded that their race is in no way inferior to ours. The social state has so to [speak (ed.)] drawn around the mind of the Indians a narrow circle, but in this circle, they show themselves the most intelligent of all men. There is without doubt in what the Cherokees have done more [v: as much] natural genius than in the greatest efforts of civilized peoples.≠

lized, and I will add the most greedy people of the globe, while they are themselves still half barbarian; to find in their teachers, masters, and to receive oppression and enlightenment at the same time.[u]

Living within the liberty of the woods, the Indian of North America was miserable, but he felt inferior to no one; from the moment he wants to enter into the social hierarchy of the whites, he can occupy only the last rank; for he enters ignorant and poor into a society where knowledge and wealth reign. After leading an agitated life, full of evils and dangers, but filled at the same time with emotions and grandeur,[18] he must submit to a

u. In his "Report on the proposed law concerning the extraordinary credits asked for Algeria" (*Moniteur universel,* 1 June 1847, pp. 1379–84, reproduced in *OC,* III, 1, pp. 309–89), Tocqueville suggests taking into account the errors of the conquest of America and preventing the destruction of the Arabs by Western civilization (pp. 327–30).

18. *There is in the adventurous life of hunting peoples some irresistible attraction that catches hold of the heart of man and carries him away despite his reason and experience. You can be persuaded of this truth by reading the* Mémoires de Tanner.

Tanner is a European who was carried off at the age of six by the Indians and who remained for thirty years in the woods with them. It is impossible to see anything more dreadful than the miseries he describes. He shows us tribes without chiefs, families without nations, isolated men, mutilated remnants of powerful tribes, wandering haphazardly amid the ice and among the desolate wilderness areas of Canada. Hunger and cold pursue them; each day life seems ready to escape from them. Among them, mores have lost their sway, traditions are without power. Men become more and more barbaric. Tanner shares all these evils; he knows his European origin, he is not forcibly kept far from whites; he goes, on the contrary, each year to trade with them, to wander through their dwelling-places, to see their comfort; he knows that the day he wants to reenter civilized life he will easily be able to succeed in doing so, and he remains thirty years in the wilderness. When he finally returns to civilized society, he confesses that the existence whose miseries he has described has secret charms for him that he cannot define; he returns there constantly after having left and pulls himself away from so many evils only with a thousand regrets; and when he has finally settled among the whites, several of his children refuse to come to share with him his tranquillity and his comfort.

I met Tanner myself at the entry to Lake Superior. He appeared to me still to resemble a savage much more than a civilized man.

You do not find in the work of Tanner either order or taste; but the author draws, even unknowingly, a lively picture of the prejudices, passions, vices and above all the miseries of those among whom he lived.

Viscount Ernest de Blosseville, author of an excellent work on the penal colonies of England, has translated the Mémoires de Tanner.[v] *The Viscount de Blosseville added to his*

translation notes of great interest that will allow the reader to compare the facts recounted by Tanner with those already related by a great number of ancient and modern observers.

All those who desire to know the present state and to foresee the future destiny of the Indian races of North America should consult the work of the Viscount de Blosseville.

v. In the first edition: *"of Tanner* and will publish them in the course of the year about to begin."

George W. Pierson (*Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* p. 235) indicates that the travelers met Tanner on the steamboat *Ohio,* on the way to Detroit, 19 July 1831, and that the latter offered them his book. Beaumont gives the following account of a conversation with Tanner, that he places on the Mississippi:

> The Choctaws were being escorted by an agent of the American government charged with implementing their removal. This man, who did not know the language of the Indians, had an interpreter close to them, an inhabitant of the United States named Tanner, who is famous in America for having spent more than thirty years among the savage tribes of the north. I congratulated myself all the more about meeting him because I had often desired to do so; this circumstance, joined with the interest that the misfortune of the Indians inspired in me, suggested to me the thought of crossing the Mississippi with them and accompanying them to their new territory. ≠I shared this idea with my traveling companion who very much approved it.≠ As soon as I had resolved to do so, I felt a burst of joy and enthusiasm thinking that I was going to see the beautiful forests dreamed of in my imagination, the vast prairies described by Cooper, and the profound solitudes unknown in the Old World.
>
> The signal for the departure was given and Tanner, with whom I soon began to converse, assured me that in less than a day we would reach the mouth of the Arkansas and that one day more would be enough for us to move up the river a distance of more than 150 miles.
>
> While we descended the Mississippi, I did not cease questioning Tanner about the mores of the Indians and about the causes for their misfortune. He gave me notions full of interest about them that I would like one day to be able to make known in all their scope.—"You, who sympathize with their misfortunes," he says to me, "hurry to know them!, for soon they will have disappeared from the earth. The forests of Arkansas are *given forever* to them! These are, it is true, the terms of the treaty! But what mockery! The lands that they occupied in Georgia had also been given to them, thirty years ago, *forever!* They will be left in this new country that is abandoned to them as long as their lands are not needed. But as soon as the American population finds itself too squeezed together on the left bank of the Mississippi, it will sweep into the fertile countries of the other bank and the Indian will again undergo the fate that was reserved for him, that of retreating before European civilization. Note," Tanner also said to me, "that it is, to a certain point, in the interest of the Indian to act in this way at the approach of whites; in fact he lives almost exclusively on game, and the game itself moves away as soon as civilized society approaches it. It is enough to put a large road through a country to chase away all the wild buffaloes. The Indian who goes closely along with them is only following his means of existence, but by

monotonous, obscure and degraded existence. To earn by hard work and amid shame the bread that must nourish him, such in his eyes is the sole result of this civilization that is praised to him.

And he is not always sure to obtain even this result.

When the Indians undertake to imitate the Europeans their neighbors, and like them to cultivate the land, they soon find themselves exposed to the effects of a very destructive competition. The white is master of the secrets of agriculture. The Indian starts out crudely in an art that he does not know. The one easily makes great harvests grow, the other extracts the fruits of the earth only with a thousand efforts.

The European is placed amid a population that he knows and whose needs he shares.

The savage is isolated in the middle of an enemy people whose mores, language and laws he knows incompletely, but without whom he cannot manage. Only by exchanging his products for those of the whites can he become well-off, for his compatriots are nothing more than a feeble help to him.

Therefore, when the Indian wants to sell the fruits of his work, he does not always find the buyer that the European farmer easily finds, and he can produce only at great cost what the other delivers for a small price.

So the Indian has escaped from the evils to which barbarian nations are exposed only to subject himself to the greatest miseries of civilized peoples, and he finds almost as much difficulty living amid our abundance as within his forests.

constantly advancing toward the west, he will meet the Pacific Ocean.—This will be the end of his journey and of his life. How many years will pass before his ruin? You could not say. Each vessel from Europe that brings to America new inhabitants accelerates the destruction of the Indians. After halting in Arkansas, the Choctaws will be pushed back beyond the Rocky Mountains; this will be their second stage; and when the wave of the American population arrives, they will not be able either to remain or to go beyond. Their destiny will be fulfilled."

While Tanner thus spoke to me, I felt penetrated by a profound sadness.

This conversation belongs to the notes and drafts of *Marie* (YTC, Beaumont, CIX). The details that precede and follow this conversation appear in *Marie,* II, pp. 48–55 and 292–93.

At home, however, the habits of the wandering life are still not destroyed. Traditions have not lost their dominion; the taste for hunting has not been extinguished. The savage joys that he formerly experienced deep within the woods are then represented by the most vivid colors in his troubled imagination; the privations that he endured there seem to him less dreadful in contrast, the perils that he encountered less great. The independence that he enjoyed among his equals contrasts with the servile position that he occupies in civilized society.

From another perspective, the solitude where, for so long, he lived free is still near him; a few hours of walking can restore it to him. For the half-cleared field from which he draws hardly enough to feed himself, the whites, his neighbors, offer him a price that to him seems high. Perhaps this money that the Europeans present to him would allow him to live happily and tranquilly far from them. He leaves his plow, picks up his weapons, and goes into the wilderness again forever.[19]

19. *This destructive influence that very civilized peoples exercise on those who are less so is noticeable among the Europeans themselves. [{See what Volney says in his* Tableau du climat et du sol des Etats-Unis, *p. 360.}]*

Some French had founded, nearly a century ago, in the middle of the wilderness, the city of Vincennes on the Wabash. They lived there in great abundance until the arrival of the American emigrants. The latter soon began to ruin the old inhabitants by competition; then they bought their lands from them for a small sum. At the moment when Volney, from whom I borrow this detail, came upon Vincennes, the number of French was reduced to a hundred individuals, most of whom were prepared to move to Louisiana or Canada. These French were honest men, but without enlightenment and without industry; they had contracted part of the savage habits. The Americans, who were perhaps inferior to them from the moral point of view, had an immense intellectual superiority over them; they were industrious, educated, rich, and used to governing themselves.

I myself saw in Canada, where the intellectual difference between the two races is much less pronounced, the Englishman, master of commerce and industry in the country of the Canadian, stretch out on all sides and squeeze the Frenchman into limits too narrow.

In the same way, in Louisiana, nearly all the commercial and industrial activity is concentrated in the hands of the Anglo-Americans.

Something still more striking is happening in the province of Texas; the state of Texas is, as you know, part of Mexico and serves as the frontier with the United States. For several years, Anglo-Americans have entered individually into this province still poorly populated, bought lands, taken hold of industry, and rapidly taken the place of the original population. You can foresee that if Mexico does not hasten to stop this movement, Texas will not take long to escape from it.

You can judge the truth of this sad portrait by what is happening among the Creeks and the Cherokees, whom I cited.

These Indians, in the little that they have done, have surely shown as much natural genius as the peoples of Europe in their wider undertakings; but nations, like men, need time to learn, whatever their intelligence and their efforts.[w]

While these savages worked to become civilized, the Europeans continued to envelop them from all sides and to squeeze them in more and more. Today, the two races have finally met; they touch each other. The Indian has already become superior to his father, the savage, but he is still very inferior to the white, his neighbor. With the aid of their resources and their enlightenment, the Europeans did not take long to appropriate most of the advantages that possession of the soil could provide to the natives; the Europeans settled among them, seized the land or bought it at a low price, and ruined the Indians by a competition that the latter could in no way sustain. Isolated in their own country, the Indians no longer formed anything except a small colony of inconvenient foreigners in the middle of a numerous and dominating people.[20]

If a few differences comparatively not very perceptible in European civilization lead to such results, it is easy to understand what must happen when the most perfected civilization of Europe enters into contact with Indian barbarism.

w. On a detached sheet: "Put the piece from Jefferson on Logan to prove capacity of the Indians. See *Notes On Virginia,* p. 153."

20. *See, in the* Legislative Documents, *21st Congress, n. 89, the excesses of all kinds committed by the white population on the territory of the Indians. Sometimes the Anglo-Americans settle on one part of the territory, as if land was lacking elsewhere, and troops from Congress must come to expel them; sometimes they carry away the livestock, burn the houses, cut down the fruit of the natives or use violence against their persons.*

All these documents provide evidence that each day the natives are victims of abuse by force. Normally the Union maintains an agent among the Indians charged with representing it; the report of the agent for the Cherokees is found among the documents that I am citing; the language of this official is nearly always favorable to the savages. "The intrusion of whites into the territory of the Cherokees," he says, p. 12, "will cause the ruin of those who live there leading a poor and inoffensive existence." Further along you see that the state of Georgia, wanting to narrow the limits of the Cherokees, proceeds to a boundary marking; the federal agent remarks that, having been made only by the whites and without full hearings, the boundary marking has no value.

Washington said, in one of his messages to Congress: "We are more enlightened and more powerful than the Indian nations; it is to our honor to treat them with kindness and even with generosity."

This noble and virtuous policy has not been followed.

The greediness of the colonists usually joins with the tyranny of the government. Although the Cherokees and the Creeks were settled on the soil they inhabited before the arrival of the Europeans, although the Americans often negotiated with them as with foreign nations, the states within which they find themselves did not want to recognize them as independent peoples, and undertook to subject these men, barely out of the forests, to their magistrates, to their customs and to their laws.[21] Misery had pushed these unfortunate Indians toward civilization, oppression drives them today back toward barbarism. Many of them, leaving their half-cleared fields, resume the habit of savage life.

If you pay attention to the tyrannical measures adopted by the legislatures of the states of the South, to the conduct of their governors and the actions of their courts, you will easily be convinced that the complete expulsion of the Indians is the final goal toward which all their efforts simultaneously tend. The Americans of this part of the Union enviously regard the lands that the natives possess;[22] they feel that the latter have not yet completely lost the traditions of savage life, and before civilization has firmly attached them to the soil, they want to reduce them to despair and force them to move away.

Oppressed by the particular states, the Creeks and Cherokees addressed

21. *In 1829, the state of Alabama divides the territory of the Creeks into counties and submits the Indian population to European magistrates.*

In 1830, the state of Mississippi classes the Choctaws and the Chickasaws with the whites and declares that those among them who take the title of chief will be punished with a fine of 1,000 dollars and a year in prison.

*When the state of Mississippi thus extended its laws over the Choctaw Indians who lived within its limits, the latter assembled together; their chief showed them what the claim of the whites was and read to them some of the laws to which the whites wanted to subject them. The savages declared with one voice that it would be better to plunge again into the wilderness. (*Mississippi Papers.*)*

22. *The Georgians, who find themselves so bothered by the nearby presence of the Indians, occupy a territory that still does not number more than seven inhabitants per square mile. In France, there are one hundred sixty-two individuals in the same space.*

the central government. The latter is not insensitive to their misfortunes; that government would sincerely like to save the remnants of the natives and assure them the free possession of the territory that it guaranteed to them.[23] But when it seeks to execute this plan, the particular states put up a formidable resistance, and then the central government resolves without difficulty to let a few savage tribes, already half destroyed, perish in order not to put the American Union in danger.[x]

Powerless to protect the Indians, the federal government would at least like to ease their lot; to this end, it has undertaken to transport them at its expense to other places.[*]

23. *In 1818, Congress ordered that the territory of Arkansas would be visited by American commissioners, accompanied by a deputation of Creeks, Choctaws and Chickasaws. This expedition was commanded by Messrs. Kennerly, McCoy, Wash Hood and John Bell. See the different reports of the commissioners and their journal in the papers of Congress, n. 87, House of Representatives.*

x. Note not included in the chapter, but which appears in the manuscript in this place:

> Extract from a speech given before a town meeting of Philadelphia, 11 January 1830:
>
> Can a government founded on the celebrated statement of the rights of man that accompanies our Declaration of Independence consent shamelessly to violate among others those very rights for which it then fought? If *dependent* nations have been able to declare themselves *independent,* how can we refuse to allow nations that are already independent to remain so? Is the people that abuses its power in order to exercise tyranny externally a sincere friend of liberty? And would it not be tyrannical to drive a nation from its partially cultivated lands and from its homes and to send it to create a new settlement in the wilderness, where greed will not long allow it to remain in peace, if we are to judge the future by the past? Amid the discouragement that they must feel, will the Indians even have the energy to undertake what we expect of them?
>
> The expulsion of the Moors from Spain is universally considered an act of tyranny. The Moors, however, were the sons of the former conquerors and the former enemies of the religion and mores of Spain. The Cherokees are in no way the enemies of the people of the United States.

This note is found with others in a copy that is not in Tocqueville's hand. A note on the jacket of the section on the Indians explains the origin of the copies: "To dictate or copy before thinking about correcting." The copies remaining in this jacket consist of unpublished fragments and notes.

[*]. See the instructions of the Secretary of War to Generals Cannall [Carroll (ed.)] and Goffre [Coffee (ed.)], dated 30 May 1830.

There are 75,000 Indians to transport.

Between the latitudes of 33rd and 37th degrees north, extends a vast country that has taken the name Arkansas, from the principal river that waters it. It borders on one side the frontier of Mexico, on the other, the banks of the Mississippi. A multitude of small streams and rivers cut across it from all sides; the climate is mild and the soil fertile. Only a few wandering hordes of savages are found there.[*] It is to a section of this country, which is closest to Mexico and at a great distance from American settlements, that the government of the Union wants to transport the remnants of the native populations of the South.

At the end of the year 1831, we were assured that 10,000 Indians had already gone to the banks of the Arkansas; others arrived every day. But Congress has not been able to create as well a unanimous will among those whose fate it wanted to determine. Some consent with joy to move away from the home of tyranny; the most enlightened refuse to abandon their growing crops and new dwellings; they think that if the work of civilization is interrupted, it will not be resumed again; they fear that sedentary habits, barely contracted, will be permanently lost in the middle of still savage countries where nothing is prepared for the subsistence of a farming people; they know that in this new wilderness they will find enemy hordes and, to resist them, they no longer have the energy of barbarism and have not yet acquired the strength of civilization. The Indians easily discover, moreover, all that is provisional in the settlement that is proposed to them. Who will assure them that they will finally be able to rest in peace in their new refuge? The United States promises to maintain them there; but the territory that they now occupy had formerly been guaranteed to them by the most solemn oaths.[24] Today the American government does not, it is true, take their

[*]. See *Journey of Long,* vol. II.

24. *You find, in the treaty made with the Creeks in 1790, this clause: "The United States solemnly guarantee to the Creek Nation, all their lands within the limits of the United States to the westward and southward of the boundary described in the preceding article."*

The treaty concluded in July 1791 with the Cherokees contains what follows: "The United States solemnly guarantee to the Cherokee nation, all their lands not hereby ceded. If any citizen of the United States, or other person not being an Indian, shall settle on any of the Cherokees' lands, such person shall forfeit the protection of the United States, and the Cherokees may punish him or not, as they please." Art. [7 and (ed.)] *8.*

lands from them, but it allows their lands to be invaded. In a few years, undoubtedly, the same white population that now presses around them will again be at their heels in the solitude of Arkansas; they will then find the same evils again without the same remedies; and sooner or later without land, they will still have to resign themselves to dying.

There is less cupidity and violence in the way the Union acts toward the Indians than in the policy followed by the states; but the two governments equally lack good faith.

The states, while extending what they call the benefit of their laws to the Indians,[y] count on the fact that the latter will prefer to move away than to submit; and the central government, while promising these unfortunate people a permanent refuge in the West, is not unaware that it is not able to guarantee it to them.[25]

Therefore, the states, by their tyranny, force the savages to flee; the Union, by its promises and with the aid of its resources, makes the flight easy. These are different measures that aim at the same end.[26]

y. Note of Tocqueville on a small sheet of paper not part of the manuscript: "It is admitted by all, says Mr. Everett in his speech, that the Indians are not able to live under the laws of the states. The Indians say it; the government says it. The states do not deny it. Clearly the laws of whites have not been made for the Indians; we and they are in agreement on this point."

25. *That does not prevent promising it to them in the most formal manner. See the letter of the President addressed to the Creeks, 23 March 1829* (Proceedings of the Indian Board in the City of New York, *p. 5): "Beyond the great river Mississippi,* [. . . (ed.) . . .]*—your father has provided a country large enough for all of you* [. . . (ed.) . . .]. *There your white brothers will not trouble you; they will have no claim to the land, and you can live upon it, you and all your children, as long as the grass grows or the water runs, in peace and plenty. It will be yours for ever."*

In a letter written to the Cherokees by the Secretary of the War Department, 18 April 1829, this official declares to them that they must not deceive themselves about retaining the enjoyment of the territory that they occupy at the moment, but he gives them this same positive assurance for the time when they will be on the other side of the Mississippi (same work, p. 6). As if the power that he now lacked would not be lacking in the same way then!

26. *To have an exact idea of the policy followed by the particular states and by the Union vis-à-vis the Indians, you must consult: 1. the laws of the particular states relating to the Indians (this collection is found in the legislative documents, 21st Congress, n. 319); 2. the laws of the Union relating to the same subject, and in particular that of 30 March 1802 (these laws are found in the work of Mr. Story entitled:* Laws of the United States*); 3. finally, to know*

"By the will of our Father in Heaven, the Governor of the whole world," said the Cherokees in their petition to Congress,[27] "the red man of America has become small, and the white man great and renowned."

> When the ancestors of the people of these United States first came to the shores of America, they found the red man strong—though he was ignorant and savage, yet he received them kindly, and gave them dry land to rest their weary feet. They met in peace, and shook hands in token of friendship.
>
> Whatever the white man wanted and asked of the Indian, the latter willingly gave. At that time the Indian was the lord, and the white man the suppliant. But now the scene has changed. The strength of the red man has become weakness. As his neighbors increased in numbers, his power became less and less, and now, of the many and powerful tribes who once covered these United States, only a few are to be seen—a few whom a sweeping pestilence has left. The Northern tribes, who were once so numerous and powerful, are now nearly extinct. Thus it has happened to the red man of America.
>
> Shall we, who are remnants, share the same fate? [. . . (ed.) . . .]
>
> The land on which we stand we have received as an inheritance from our fathers, who possessed it from time immemorial, as a gift from our common Father in Heaven. [. . . (ed.) . . .] They bequeathed it to us as their children, and we have sacredly kept it, as containing the remains of our beloved men. This right of inheritance we have never ceded nor ever forfeited. Permit us to ask what better right can the people have to a country than the right of inheritance and immemorial peaceable possession? We know it is said of late by the State of Georgia, and by the Executive of the United States, that we have forfeited this right—but we think this is said gratuitously. At what time have we made the forfeit? What great crime have we committed, whereby we must forever be divested of our country?[z] Was it when we were hostile to the United States, and took part with the King of Great Britain, during the struggle for independence? If so, why was not this forfeiture declared in the first treaty of peace between

what the current state is of the relations of the Union with all of the Indian tribes, see the report made by Mr. Cass, Secretary of War, 29 November 1823.

27. *19 November 1829. This piece is translated word for word.*

z. In the manuscript: ". . . of our country and rights?"

> the United States and our beloved men? Why was not such an article as the following inserted in the treaty: "The United States give peace to the Cherokees, but, for the part they took in the late war, declare them to be but tenants at will, to be removed when the convenience of the States, within whose chartered limits they live, shall require it"? That was the proper time to assume such a possession. But it was not thought of, nor would our forefathers have agreed to any treaty whose tendency was to deprive them of their rights and their country.

Such is the language of the Indians; what they say is true; what they foresee seems inevitable to me.

From whatever side you envisage the destiny of the natives of North America, you see only irremediable evils. If they remain savage, they are pushed ahead and kept on the move; if they want to become civilized, contact with men more civilized than they delivers them to oppression and misery. If they continue to wander from wilderness to wilderness, they perish; if they undertake to settle down, they still perish. They can become enlightened only with the aid of Europeans, and the approach of Europeans depraves them and pushes them back toward barbarism. As long as you leave them in their empty wilderness, they refuse to change their mores, and when they are finally forced to want to change them, there is no more time to do so.

The Spanish unleash their dogs on the Indians as on wild beasts; they pillage the New World like a city taken by assault, without discrimination and without pity; but you cannot destroy everything, fury has an end. The rest of the Indian populations that escaped the massacres ended up mingling with their conquerors and adopting their religion and their mores [{the Indians today share the rights of those who conquered them and one day perhaps will rule over them}].[28]

The conduct of the Americans of the United States toward the natives radiates, in contrast, the purest love of forms and of legality. Provided that the Indians remain in the savage state, the Americans do not in any way

28. *But the Spanish must not be honored for this result. If the Indian tribes had not already been settled on the soil by agriculture at the moment of the arrival of the Europeans, they would have undoubtedly been destroyed in South America as in North America.*

get involved in their affairs and they treat them as independent peoples; they do not allow themselves to occupy their lands without having duly acquired them by means of a contract; and if by chance an Indian nation is no longer able to live in its territory, the Americans take it fraternally by the hand and lead it themselves to die outside of the country of its fathers.

The Spanish, with the help of monstrous crimes without precedents, while covering themselves with an indelible shame [{that will live as long as their name}], were not able to succeed in exterminating the Indian race, nor even in preventing it from sharing their rights;[a] the Americans of the United States have achieved this double result with a marvelous ease, calmly, legally, philanthropically, without shedding blood, without violating a single one of the great principles of morality[29] in the eyes of the world. You cannot destroy men while better respecting the laws of humanity.

[{This world is, it must be admitted, a sad and ridiculous theater.}]

a. Several of these ideas already appear in a letter from Tocqueville to his mother, dated 25 December 1831, from Mississippi (YTC, BIa1, reproduced in *OCB,* VII, pp. 99–106). In a travel note after this letter, and dated 3 January 1832, Tocqueville remarks:

> Why of all the European races of the New World is the English race the one that has most preserved the purity of its blood and has least mingled with the native races? Apart from powerful reasons drawn from national character, from temperament, a particular cause of difference exists. Spanish America was peopled by adventurers attracted by thirst for gold, and who, transplanted alone on the other side of the Atlantic, found themselves forced in a way to contract unions with the women of the countries they inhabited. The English colonies were peopled by men who fled their country out of religious passion, or whose goal, by coming to the New World, was to live there by cultivating the land. They came with women and children and were able at once to form a complete society (pocket notebook 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 192).

29. *See among others the report made by Mr. Bell in the name of the Committee of Indian Affairs, 24 February 1830, in which it is established, p. 5, by very logical reasons, and where it is proved very learnedly that: "The fundamental principle, that the Indians had no right by virtue of their ancient possession either of soil, or sovereignty, has never been abandoned expressly or by implication." That is to say that* the Indians, by virtue of their ancient possession, have acquired no right of either property or sovereignty, fundamental principle that has never been abandoned, either expressly or tacitly.

While reading this report, written moreover by a skillful hand, you are astonished by the facility and ease with which, from the first words, the author gets rid of arguments founded on natural right and reason, that he calls abstract and theoretical principles. The more I

Position That the Black Race Occupies in the United States;[30] Dangers to Which Its Presence Exposes the Whites[c]

consider it, the more I think that the only difference that exists between the civilized man and the one who is not, in relation to justice, is this: the one contests in the judicial system the rights that the other is content to violate.

30. *Before treating this matter, I owe the reader a warning. In a book that I spoke about already at the beginning of this work, and that is now on the verge of appearing, M. Gustave de Beaumont, my traveling companion, had as his principal object to make the position of Negroes amid the white population of the United States known in France. M. de Beaumont has thoroughly treated a question that my subject has only allowed me to touch upon. His book, whose notes contain a very great number of very precious and entirely unknown legislative and historical documents, also presents scenes whose energy can be equaled only by the truth. The work of M. de Beaumont should be read by those who want to understand to what excesses of tyranny men are pushed little by little once they have begun to go beyond nature and humanity.*[b]

b. This note does not exist in the manuscript.

c. To ask about Blacks.

1. Black population, slave and emancipated in the United States (illegible word).

2. Is it true that the laws of the Carolinas and Georgia forbid teaching slaves to read and write? Gazette of December.

(1) How do these laws set about to prohibit the (illegible word)?

(2) What does the President want for [the (ed.)] bank, to destroy it or to replace it?

(3) What did he do against the federal courts. (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 86).

The Quaker Collection of the library of Haverford College in Pennsylvania preserves three pages of questions in English concerning the "colored population." A note from the last page attributes these questions to Tocqueville, but the writing is that of Gustave de Beaumont. The questions bear upon the separation of Blacks and whites in the schools, hospitals, churches and other public places, on the intellectual equality of the two races, on the possibility of a gradual abolition, and on the danger of a race war. Beaumont is concerned as well about the differences between the law and its execution: "In a government founded upon the will of the people, *the public opinion* secures the *impartial* execution of the law?—How is it possible that the law is *impartially* executed in reference to black people when the public opinion concerning such people is not *impartial* itself?" It has not been possible to identify the person to whom this inquiry is addressed. It probably concerns one of the persons that Tocqueville and Beaumont met in Pennsylvania (see George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 782–86). With the kind permission of Haverford College, Pennsylvania (Quaker Collection, E. W. Smith, no. 95).

Why it is more difficult to abolish slavery and to make its mark disappear among modern peoples than among ancient peoples.—In the United States, prejudice of whites against Blacks seems to become stronger as slavery is destroyed.—Situation of Negroes in the states of the North and the South.—Why the Americans abolish slavery.—Servitude, which brutalizes the slave, impoverishes the master.—Differences that you notice between the right bank and the left bank of the Ohio.—To what they must be attributed.—The Black race moves back toward the South as slavery does.—How this is explained.—Difficulties that the states of the South have in abolishing slavery.—Dangers for the future.—Preoccupation of minds.—Founding of a Black colony in Africa.—Why the Americans of the South increase the rigors of slavery, at the same time that they are growing disgusted with it.

The Indians will die in isolation as they lived; but the destiny of the Negroes is in a way intertwined with that of the Europeans. Although the two races are bound to each other, they do not blend together. It is as difficult for them to separate completely as to unite.

The most formidable of all the evils that threaten the future of the United States arises from the presence of Blacks on their soil. When you seek the cause of the present troubles and future dangers of the Union, you almost always end up at this first fact, from no matter where you start.

Men generally need to make great and constant efforts to create lasting evils; but there is one evil that enters into the world furtively. At first, you barely notice it amid the usual abuses of power; it begins with an individual whose name is not preserved by history; it is deposited like an accursed seed at some point in the soil; it then feeds on itself, spreads effortlessly, and grows naturally with the society that received it. This evil is slavery.

Christianity had destroyed servitude; the Christians of the sixteenth century reestablished it; but they never allowed it in their social system other than as an exception, and they took care to restrict it to a single one of the

human races. They therefore gave humanity a wound not as extensive, but infinitely more difficult to heal.[d]

Two things must be carefully distinguished: slavery in itself and its consequences.

The immediate evils produced by slavery were nearly the same among ancient peoples as they are among modern peoples, but the consequences of these evils were different. Among the ancients the slave belonged to the same race as his master, and often he was superior to him in education and in enlightenment.[31] Liberty alone separated them; once liberty was granted, they easily blended.

So the ancients had a very simple means to rid themselves of slavery and its consequences; this means was emancipation, and as soon as they used it in a general way, they succeeded.[f]

d. "Europeans by destroying millions of Indians in the New World inflicted a horrible, but temporary evil on humanity. Slavery [v: the presence of Blacks] is an evil that feeds on itself [v: perpetuates itself with the generations], that is constantly reborn, and that can only cease by evils greater than itself" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 93).

31. *We know that several of the most celebrated authors of antiquity were or had been slaves: Aesop and Terence are among this number. Slaves were not always taken from among barbarian nations; war put very civilized men into servitude.*[e]

e. In the work of Thomas Clarkson *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (London: J. Phillips, 1788, pp. 13–16), you find reflections very similar to those of Tocqueville on the difference between modern and ancient slavery; the author likewise cites Aesop and Terence as examples of civilized slaves. Beaumont possessed a French edition of this book in his library (Cf. *Marie,* I, pp. 296–301), as well as the following works on slavery: Brissot de Warville, *Examen critique des "Voyages dans l'Amérique septentrionale" de M. le marquis de Chastellux;* Marquis de Condorcet, *Réflexions sur l'esclavage des Noirs;* Thomas Clarkson, *Essai sur les désavantages de la traite;* Benjamin S. Frossard, *La cause des esclaves nègres et des habitants de la Guinée, portée au tribunal de la justice, de la religion, de la politique;* Daniel Lescallier, *Réflexions sur le sort des noirs dans nos colonies;* Théophile Mandar, *Discours sur le commerce et l'esclavage des nègres* (this information is contained in the thesis of Alvis Lee Tinnin, *Gustave de Beaumont, Prophet of the American Dilemma,* New Haven, Yale University, 1961).

f. When it is said that slavery is disappearing, it has disappeared in effect. Nothing like that. Prejudices that remain. Law of New England. As slavery withdraws, whites fear blending more, become scornful. Small number of mulattos. School, church and industry [separate(?) (ed.)]. The laws less harsh, hatreds more so. Slavery was cruel. You can make slavery end, but not the prejudices that it gave birth to; you can make the Negro cease to be a slave, but not make him become the equal of the white (YTC, CVh, 2, pp. 95–96).

Not that the marks of servitude in antiquity did not still continue to exist for some time after servitude was destroyed. [{Real inequality was followed by social inequality.}]

There is a natural prejudice that leads man to scorn the one who has been his inferior, long after he has become his equal; real inequality produced by fortune or law is always followed by an imaginary inequality that has its roots in mores; but among the ancients this secondary effect of slavery came to an end. The emancipated man so strongly resembled the men who were born free that it soon became impossible to distinguish him from them.

What was more difficult among the ancients was to change the law; what is more difficult among modern peoples is to change mores, and for us the real difficulty begins where in antiquity it ended.

This happens because among modern peoples the non-material and transitory fact of slavery is combined in the most fatal way with the material and permanent fact of the difference of race. The memory of slavery dishonors the race, and race perpetuates the memory of slavery.

There is not an African who came freely to the shores of the New World; from that it follows that all those who are found there today are slaves or emancipated. Thus the Negro, together with life, transmits to all of his descendants the external sign of his shame. Law can destroy servitude; but only God alone can make its mark disappear.[g]

The modern slave differs from the master not only in liberty, but also in origin. You can make the Negro free, but he remains in the position of a stranger vis-à-vis the European.

That is still not all. In this man who is born in lowliness, in this stranger that slavery introduced among us, we scarcely acknowledge the general features of humanity. His face appears hideous to us, his intelligence seems limited to us, his tastes are base; we very nearly take him for an intermediate being between brute and man.[32]

g. "When you see the difficulty of destroying the inequality in the laws, you understand what is impracticable about destroying the one in nature" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 90).

32. *For whites to abandon the opinion that they have conceived of the intellectual and moral inferiority of their former slaves, it would be necessary for Negroes to change, and they cannot change as long as this opinion persists.*

So after abolishing slavery, modern peoples still have to destroy three prejudices much more elusive and more tenacious than slavery: the prejudice of the master, the prejudice of race, and finally the prejudice of the white.

It is very difficult for us, who have had the good fortune to be born among men whom nature made our fellows and the law our equals; it is very difficult for us, I say, to understand what insurmountable distance separates the Negro of America from the European. But we can have a remote idea of it by reasoning by analogy.[h]

We formerly saw among us great inequalities whose principles were only in legislation. What more fictitious than a purely legal inequality! What more contrary to the instinct of man than permanent differences established among men clearly similar! These differences have continued to exist for centuries however; they still continue to exist in a thousand places; everywhere they have left imaginary marks that time can scarcely erase. If the inequality created solely by laws is so difficult to uproot, how to destroy the one that seems to have its immutable foundations in nature itself?[m]

As for me, when I consider what difficulty aristocratic bodies of whatever nature have merging with the mass of the people, and the extreme care that they take to preserve for centuries the imaginary barriers that separate them, I despair of seeing an aristocracy founded on visible and imperishable signs disappear.[n]

h. In the margin: "≠I regard the mixing of races as the greatest misfortune of humanity.≠"

m. "Among the Americans slavery seemed contrary neither to religion nor to the interest of the State; what was more difficult was to establish it in the laws" (YTC, CVh, 3, pp. 2–3).

n. In the margin:

≠Thus in America prejudice seems to grow stronger as slavery withdraws. The difference becomes marked in the mores as it fades away in the laws. In several countries of Europe different peoples found themselves together. They took centuries to blend; but they were similar on all points. The Moors who hardly differed from the Spanish could not manage to mingle with them. If the various offshoots of the same human family have so much difficulty mingling and blending, how to admit that two radically different races will ever manage to do so? If a slight difference in the nature of features was found to be a nearly insurmountable obstacle, what will it be when you find a difference so great that what appears beautiful to one seems the height of ugliness to the other?≠

So those who hope that one day the Europeans will blend with the Negroes seem to me to entertain a chimera. My reason does not lead me to believe it, and I see nothing in the facts that indicate it.

Until now, wherever whites have been the most powerful, they have held Negroes in degradation or in slavery. Wherever Negroes have been the strongest, they have destroyed whites; it is the only accounting that might ever be possible between the two races.

If I consider the United States of our day, I see clearly that in a certain part of the country the legal barrier that separates the two races is tending to fall, but not that of mores. I see slavery receding; the prejudice to which it gave birth is immovable.

In the part of the Union where Negroes are no longer slaves, have they drawn nearer to whites? Every man who has lived in the United States will have noted that an opposite effect has been produced. [{In no part of the Union are the two races as separated as in New [England (ed.)] [v: the North].}]

Racial prejudice seems to me stronger in the states that have abolished slavery than in those where slavery still exists, and nowhere does it appear as intolerant as in the states where servitude has always been unknown.[f] o

o. These alphabetical notes appear in the manuscript, but not the text of the notes, which is found, however, in one of the drafts:

(a) Among the states where slavery is abolished, Massachusetts is the only one I know that has prohibited the legitimate union of the two races. See *Laws of Massachusetts,* vol. I, p. [blank (ed.)].

(b) Among the states that have abolished slavery or did not allow it, the states of Delaware, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois are the only ones I know that have excluded Negroes from electoral rights. In the others the law is silent about it and consequently allows it. In the constitution of the state of New York, amended in 1821, Negroes can vote, but particular property qualifications are required of them, which makes the permission of the law illusory.

(c) In most of the states where slavery is abolished, the law does not make any color distinction while establishing the qualification for the jury. But as it leaves an arbitrary power to the officials charged with drawing up the list, care is taken never to put the name of a Black on it.

(d) While I was in New York a French (illegible word) [Creole (?) (ed.)] from the Antilles, coming to the theater, {was taken for a mulatto and refused} was resisted in

It is true that in the North of the Union the law allows Negroes and whites to contract legitimate unions;[a] but opinion declares vile the white who joins in marriage with a Negro woman; and it would be difficult to cite an example of such a deed.

In nearly all the states where slavery is abolished, the Negro has been given electoral rights;[b] but if he presents himself to vote, he risks his life.[p] Oppressed, he can make a complaint, but he finds only whites among his judges. The law opens the juror's seat to him,[c] but prejudice pushes him away from it. His son is excluded from the school where the descendant of the European goes to be instructed. In the theaters he cannot, even at the price of gold, buy the right to sit next to the one who was his master;[d] in the hospitals he lies apart. The Black is allowed to beseech the same God as the whites, but not to pray to him at the same altar. He has his priests

his entry to the boxes of the dress circle for which he had purchased the right at the door. He did not understand English; a violent quarrel ensued that nearly had unfortunate consequences; with his swarthy tint it was assumed that he could indeed be a mulatto.

(e) It is right to note that in general Negroes are mingled with whites in Catholic churches. Protestantism establishes in the religious order the government of the middle classes, and the haughtiness of the middle classes toward the people is known.

(f) Not only does Ohio not allow slavery, but it prohibits the entry into its territory of free Negroes and forbids them to acquire anything there.

(g) The gradual abolition of slavery was declared in Pennsylvania in 1780. In Massachusetts this abolition goes back to the very period of the constitution in 1779; Connecticut began to abolish slavery in 1784. The state of New York in 1799. *Kent's Commentaries,* vol. II, p. 201 (YTC, CVh, 2, pp. 76–77).

Note g belongs to the following paragraph, in the margin in the manuscript: "Slavery today is abolished in {two-thirds} of the Union (here a note on the precise number of states where slavery does not exist. I believe that the number does not exceed twelve, but these are the most important). There are portions of the territory where it has been destroyed for nearly a half century,[g] others that never allowed it in their midst."

Beaumont described the incident of the Creole twice, with many details (*Marie,* I, p. v, note and pp. 193–97).

p. Draft, under a paper pasted into place: ". . . life. The law made them the equals of whites. In public places they can take a place next to whites, but if they try to do so, people flee their approach. The same hospitals are open to them, but they occupy separate places. Even in the prisons care is taken not to mingle the two races ≠and it seems to be believed that to force a murderer to breathe the same air as a Negro is to degrade him more. His sons . . .≠"

and his churches.[e] The gates of heaven are not closed to him: but inequality scarcely stops at the edge of the other world. When the Negro is no more, his bones are thrown aside, and the difference in conditions is found again even in the equality of death.

Thus the Negro is free, but he is not able to share either the rights or the pleasures or the labors or the pains or even the tomb of the one whose equal he has been declared to be; he cannot meet him anywhere, either in life or in death.

[{What miserable mockery this is.}]

In the South where slavery still exists, Negroes are less carefully kept aside; they sometimes share the labors of whites and their pleasures; to a certain point they are permitted to mix with them. Legislation is more harsh in their regard; habits are more tolerant and milder.

In the South the master is not afraid to raise his slave up to his level, because he knows that if he wishes he will always be able to throw him back into the dust. In the North the white no longer distinctly sees the barrier that should separate him from a degraded race, and he withdraws with all the more care from the Negro because he fears that someday he will merge with him.

With the American of the South, nature sometimes reasserts its rights and for a moment reestablishes equality between Blacks and whites. In the North pride silences even the most imperious passion of man. The American of the North would perhaps consent to make the Negro woman the temporary companion of his pleasures if the legislators had declared that she must not aspire to share his bed; but she is able to become his wife, and he withdraws from her with a kind of horror.

This is how in the United States the prejudice that pushes Negroes away seems to increase proportionately as Negroes cease to be slaves, and how inequality becomes imprinted in the mores as it fades in the laws.

But if the relative position of the two races that inhabit the United States is as I have just shown, why have the Americans abolished slavery in the north of the Union, why do they keep it in the south, and what causes them to aggravate its rigors there?

It is easy to answer. Slavery is being destroyed in the United States not in the interest of the Negroes, but in that of the whites.

[≠America has given great truths to the world, but it has as well provided the world with the demonstration of an admirable truth. Christianity had condemned slavery as *odious,* the experience of the United States proves it *deadly.*≠]

The first Negroes were imported into Virginia about the year 1621.[33] So in America, as in all the rest of the world, servitude was born in the South. From there it gained ground step by step; but as slavery moved up toward the North the number of slaves kept decreasing;[34] there were always very few slaves in New England.q

The colonies were founded; a century had already passed, and an extraordinary fact began to strike everyone's attention. The provinces that possessed no slaves so to speak grew in population, in wealth, and in well-being more rapidly than those that had them.

In the first, however, the inhabitant was forced to cultivate the soil himself or to hire the services of another man; in the second, he found at his disposal workers whose efforts were not paid. So there was work and expense on one side, leisure and economy on the other. But the advantage remained with the first.

This result seemed all the more difficult to explain because the emigrants, all belonging to the same European race, had the same habits, the

33. *See* History of Virginia *by Beverley. See also, in the* Mémoires de Jefferson, *curious details about the introduction of Negroes into Virginia and about the first act that prohibited their importation in 1778.*

34. *The number of slaves was smaller in the North, but the advantages resulting from slavery were not disputed more there than in the South. In 1740, the legislature of the state of New York declares that the direct importation of slaves must be encouraged as much as possible, and that smuggling must be severely punished as tending to discourage the honest merchant* (Kent's Commentaries, *vol. II, p. 206). You find in the historical Collection of Massachusetts, vol. IV, p. 193, the curious research of Belknap on slavery in New England. The result is that, as early as 1630, Negroes were introduced, but that from that moment legislation and mores showed themselves opposed to slavery.*

Also see in this place the way in which public opinion, then the law, managed to destroy servitude.

q. "Slavery which begins in the south and spreads to the north, abolition of slavery which begins in the north and spreads to the south" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 51).

same civilization, the same laws, and differed only in slightly perceptible nuances.

Time continued to march. Leaving the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, the Anglo-Americans [{Europeans}] plunged every day further into the uninhabited areas of the West; there they encountered new terrains and climates; they had to conquer obstacles of different kinds; their races mingled, men of the South went toward the North, men of the North descended toward the South. Among all these causes, the same fact was reproduced at each step; and in general the colony in which there were no slaves became more populated and more prosperous than the one in which slavery was in force.

So as things advanced you began to see that slavery, so cruel to the slave, was deadly to the master.

But this truth was conclusively proved on the banks of the Ohio.

The river that the Indians had named the Ohio, or the Beautiful River par excellence, waters one of the most magnificent valleys that man has ever made his dwelling-place. Rolling terrain extends on the two banks of the Ohio where the soil offers inexhaustible treasures to the plowman every day; on the two banks the air is equally healthy and the climate temperate; each one of them forms the extreme boundary of a vast state. On the left the state that follows the thousand curves made by the Ohio in its course is called Kentucky; the other borrowed the name of the river itself. The two states differ only on one single point: Kentucky allowed slaves, the state of Ohio cast all of them out.[35]

So the traveler who, placed in the middle of the Ohio, allows himself to be carried along by the current until the river flows into the Mississippi navigates, so to speak, between liberty and servitude; and he has only to glance around him to judge in an instant which one is most favorable to humanity.

On the left bank of the river, the population is scattered; from time to time you see a gang of slaves with a carefree air crossing fields half deserted; the primeval forest constantly reappears; you would say that society

35. *Ohio not only does not allow slavery, but it prohibits the entry of free Negroes into its territory and forbids them to acquire anything there. See the statutes of Ohio.*

is asleep; man seems idle; it is nature that offers the image of activity and life.

From the right bank arises, in contrast, a confused murmur that proclaims from afar the presence of industry; rich crops cover the fields; elegant dwellings announce the taste and the attentions of the plowman; on all sides comfort is revealed; man seems rich and content: he is working.[36]

The state of Kentucky was founded in 1775; the state of Ohio was founded only twelve years later:[r] twelve years in America is more than a half-century in Europe. Today the population of Ohio already exceeds that of Kentucky by 250,000 inhabitants.[37]

These diverse effects of slavery and of liberty are easily understood; they are sufficient to explain clearly the differences that are found between ancient civilization and that of today.

On the left bank of the Ohio work merges with the idea of slavery; on the right bank, with that of well-being and progress; there it is debased, here it is honored. On the left bank of the river you cannot find workers belonging to the white race; they would be afraid of resembling slaves; you must rely on the efforts of Negroes. On the right bank you would look in vain for someone idle; the white extends his activity and his intelligence to all undertakings.

Thus the men who in Kentucky are charged with exploiting the natural riches of the soil have neither enthusiasm nor enlightenment; while those who could have these two things do nothing or go into Ohio in order to make use of their industry and to be able to exercise it without shame.

It is true that in Kentucky masters make slaves work without being

36. *It is not only the individual man who is active in Ohio; the state itself undertakes immense enterprises; between Lake Erie and the Ohio the state of Ohio has established a canal by means of which the Mississippi Valley communicates with the River of the North. Thanks to this canal the merchandise of Europe that arrives in New York can descend by water as far as New Orleans, across more than five hundred leagues of the continent.*

r. In the margin: "Ohio began to be inhabited 1787. Kentucky 1775. Daniel Boone." Notebook E contains several notes on Ohio and Kentucky (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1).

37. *Exact figure according to the census of 1830:*

Kentucky,	*688, 844.*
Ohio,	*937, 679.*

obliged to pay them, but they gain little benefit from their efforts, while the money that they would have given to free laborers would have been repaid with great interest by the value of their work.[s]

The free worker is paid, but he works faster than the slave, and rapidity of execution is one of the great elements of economy. The white sells his help, but you buy it only when it is useful; the Black has nothing to claim as the price for his services, but you are obliged to feed him all the time; he must be sustained in his old age as in his mature years, in his unproductive childhood as during the fruitful years of his youth, during illness as in health. It is therefore only by paying that you obtain the work of these two men: the free worker receives a salary; the slave, an education, food, care, clothing. The money that the master spends for the maintenance of the slave melts away little by little and on small particulars; you hardly notice it. The salary that you give to the worker is given all at once, and it seems to enrich only the one who receives it; but in reality the slave has cost more than the free man, and his efforts have been less productive.[38]

The influence of slavery extends still further; it penetrates even into the very soul of the master, and gives his ideas and his tastes a particular direction.

On the two banks of the Ohio nature has given man an enterprising and energetic character; but on each side of the river he makes a different use of this common quality.

s. The paragraph that follows is not in the manuscript.

38. *Apart from these causes, which make the labor of free workers, wherever they abound, more productive and more economical than that of slaves, another one must be pointed out that is particular to the United States. Over the whole surface of the Union the way to cultivate sugar cane successfully has not yet been found except on the banks of the Mississippi, near the mouth of this river, on the Gulf of Mexico. In Louisiana the cultivation of sugar cane is extremely advantageous; nowhere does the farmer gain such a great value from his efforts; and since a certain relationship is always established between the costs of production and the products, the price of slaves is very high in Louisiana. Now since Louisiana is one of the confederated states, slaves can be transported there from all parts of the Union; so the price given for a slave in New Orleans raises the price of slaves in all the other markets. The result of this is that, in countries where the land returns little, the cost of cultivation by slaves continues to be very considerable, which gives a great advantage to the competition of free workers.*

The white of the right bank, obliged to live by his own efforts, made material well-being the principal goal of his existence; and since the country that he inhabits presents inexhaustible resources to his industry, and offers constantly recurring lures to his activity, his ardor to acquire has surpassed the ordinary limits of human cupidity. You see him, tormented by the desire for wealth, go boldly down all the paths that fortune opens to him; he becomes indiscriminately seaman, pioneer, manufacturer, farmer, bearing with an equal constancy the work or the dangers attached to these different professions. There is something marvelous in the resources of his genius, and a sort of heroism in his greediness for gain.

The American of the left bank scorns not only work, but all the enterprises that work brings to success; living in idle comfort, he has the tastes of idle men; money has lost a part of its value in his eyes; he pursues fortune less than excitement and pleasure, and he expends to these ends the energy that his neighbor deploys elsewhere; he passionately loves the hunt and war; he takes pleasure in the most violent exercises of the body; the use of arms is familiar to him, and from his childhood he has learned to risk his life in single combat. So slavery not only prevents whites from making a fortune, it turns them away from wanting to do so.

The same causes, operating continuously for two centuries in opposite directions in the English colonies of North America, have ended by creating a prodigious difference between the commercial capacity of the Southerner and that of the Northerner. Today only the North has ships, factories, railroads and canals.

This difference is noticeable not only in comparing the North and the South, but in comparing the inhabitants of the South among themselves. Nearly all the men in the southernmost states of the Union who devote themselves to commercial enterprises and seek to utilize slavery have come from the North; each day the men of the North spread into this part of the American territory where there is less competition for them to fear; there they discover resources that the inhabitants did not notice, and submitting to a system that they disapprove of, they succeed in turning it to better account than those who, having established the system, still uphold it.

If I wanted to push the parallel further, I would easily prove that nearly

all the differences that are noticeable between the character of the Americans in the South and the North are born out of slavery; but this would go beyond my subject. I am trying at this moment to find out not what all the effects of servitude are, but what effects servitude produces on the material prosperity of those who have accepted it.

[≠What I limit myself to saying at this moment is this. The Americans are, of all modern peoples, those who have pushed equality and inequality furthest among men. They have combined universal suffrage and servitude. They seem to have wanted to prove in this way the advantages of equality by opposite arguments. It is claimed that the Americans, by establishing universal suffrage and the dogma of sovereignty [of the people], have made clear to the world the advantages of equality. As for me, I think that they have above all proved this by establishing servitude, and I find that they establish the advantages of equality much less by democracy than by slavery.≠]

This influence of slavery on the production of wealth could only be very imperfectly known by antiquity. Servitude existed then in all the civilized world, and the peoples who did not know it were barbarians.

So Christianity destroyed slavery only by asserting the rights of slaves; today you can attack it in the name of the master. On this point interest and morality are in agreement.[t]

t. Tocqueville bases the greatest part of his argument against slavery on considerations of an economic type. Beaumont does as much in *Marie* (I, pp. 133–35, 303–304). Certain critics have not failed to blame Tocqueville for having nearly abandoned philosophical and religious arguments. The reason for this omission seems to be a tactical choice rather than lack of awareness. Not only had Tocqueville heard it asserted right from the mouths of several Americans that slavery would disappear because it was not profitable, but he was also aware that the discussion on slavery had henceforth left the religious and moral realm to take place principally on economic grounds. Even a partisan of slavery like Achille Murat had not hesitated to write that slavery would disappear "when free labor is cheaper than the labor of slaves" (Achille Murat, *Esquisse morale et politique des États-Unis,* Paris: Crochard Libraire, 1832, p. 110). It is not impossible that Tocqueville had read this book. Alphabetic notebook A (small notebook A, YTC, BIIa) contains the following note (omitted in *Voyage, OC,* V, 1): "Authors who have written on the United States. Letters on the United States by Achille Murat, son of the ex-king of Naples, Bossage, 1830." The partisans of abolition used arguments of an economic type as well.

As these truths manifested themselves in the United States, you saw slavery retreat little by little before the light of experience.

Servitude had begun in the South and afterward spread toward the North; today it is withdrawing. Liberty, starting in the North, is moving without stopping toward the South. Among the large states Pennsylvania today forms the extreme limit of slavery to the North, but even within these limits it is shaken; Maryland, which is immediately below Pennsylvania, is preparing daily to do without it, and Virginia, which comes after Maryland, is already debating its utility and its dangers.[39]

You can cite in particular, based on Beaumont's library, one of the first modern anti-slavery works, the book of Benjamin S. Frossard, *La cause des esclaves nègres et des habitants de la Guinée portée au tribunal de la justice, de la religion, de la politique . . .* (Lyon: Aimé de la Roche, 1789, 2 vol.), and Thomas Hamilton (*Men and Manners in America,* Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1833, pp. 317–22), which Beaumont cites in his book, and who also uses arguments of this type.

The French Society for the Abolition of Slavery, to which Beaumont and Tocqueville belonged, proclaimed in 1837: "Abolition of slavery can no longer in any civilized country give rise to a discussion of principles: the only question with which enlightened minds have to be concerned today is that of the means by which this abolition could be realized without disruption in the colonies." *Revue des deux mondes,* X, 4th series, 1837, p. 418 (see the speech of Tocqueville on the English experience, reproduced on page 422).

See on this subject Sally Gersham, "Alexis de Tocqueville and Slavery," *French Historical Studies* 9, no. 3 (1976): 467–83; Richard Resh, "Alexis de Tocqueville and the Negro. Democracy in America Reconsidered," *Journal of Negro History* 48, no. 4 (1963): 251–60; Gerald M. Bonetto, "Tocqueville and American Slavery," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 15, no. 2 (1984): 129–39; Harvey Mitchell, *America After Tocqueville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and August H. Nimitz, Jr., *Marx, Tocqueville and Race in America* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003), pp. 1–39.

39. *There is a particular reason that is finally detaching the two last states that I have just named from the cause of slavery.*

The former wealth of this part of the Union was founded principally on the cultivation of tobacco. Slaves were particularly appropriate to this cultivation. Now, it happens that for quite a few years tobacco has been losing its market value; the value of the slaves, however, remains always the same. Thus the relationship between the costs of production and the products is changed. So the inhabitants of Maryland and of Virginia feel more disposed than they were thirty years ago either to do without slaves in the cultivation of tobacco, or to abandon the cultivation of tobacco and slavery at the same time.

No great change in human institutions takes place without discovering, among the causes of this change, the inheritance law.

When unequal division ruled in the South, each family was represented by a rich man who did not feel the need any more than he had the taste for work; the members of his family that the law had excluded from the common inheritance lived around him in the same manner, as so many parasitic plants; you then saw in all the families of the South what you still see today in the noble families of certain countries of Europe, where the younger sons, without having the same wealth as the eldest son, remain as idle as he. This similar effect was produced in America and in Europe by entirely analogous causes. In the South of the United States the entire race of whites formed an aristocratic body at the head of which stood a certain number of privileged individuals whose wealth was permanent and whose leisure was inherited.[u] These leaders of the American nobility perpetuated the traditional prejudices of the white race in the body that they represented, and maintained the honorable character of idleness. Within this aristocracy you could find poor men, but not workers; poverty there seemed preferable to industry; so Black workers and slaves encountered no competitors, and whatever opinion you might have about the utility of their efforts you very much had to use them, since they were the only ones available.

From the moment when the law of inheritance was abolished all fortunes began to diminish simultaneously, all families moved in the same way closer to the state in which work becomes necessary to existence; many among them entirely disappeared; all foresaw the moment when it would be necessary for each man to provide for his needs by himself. Today you still see the rich, but they no longer form a compact and hereditary body; they were

u. Many of Tocqueville's ideas on the South of the United States come from conversations that he had during the months of September and October 1831 with Brown, John Quincy Adams and Latrobe (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 87–152). At the beginning of November Tocqueville was so convinced of the existence of an aristocratic spirit in the South that, when he met Charles Carroll, he immediately saw in his manners and his way of life the proof of the existence of the southern aristocracy that he had been told had already nearly disappeared.

not able to adopt a spirit, to persevere there, and to make it penetrate into all ranks. So the prejudice that condemned work began to be abandoned by common accord; there were more poor, and the poor were able without being ashamed to concern themselves with the means of gaining their livelihood. Thus one of the most immediate effects of equal division was to create a class of free workers. From the moment when the free worker entered into competition with the slave, the inferiority of the latter made itself felt, and slavery was attacked in its very essence, which is the interest of the master.

As slavery retreats, the Black race follows it in its backward march, and returns with it toward the tropics from where it originally came.

This can seem extraordinary at first glance; we will soon understand it. By abolishing the principle of servitude, the Americans do not free the slaves.

Perhaps what is about to follow would be difficult to understand if I did not cite an example. I will choose that of the state of New York. In 1788, the state of New York prohibits the sale of slaves within it. This was a roundabout way of prohibiting importation. From that moment the number of Negroes no longer grows except by the natural increase of the Black population. Eight years later a more decisive measure is taken, and it is declared that from July 4, 1799 onward, all children born of slave parents will be free. All means of increase are then closed; there are still slaves, but you can say that servitude no longer exists.

From the period when a state of the North also prohibits the importation of slaves, Blacks are no longer removed from the South to be transported to that state.

From the moment when a state of the North forbids the sale of Negroes, the slave, no longer able to leave the hands of the one who owns him, becomes a burdensome property, and there is an interest in transporting him to the South.

The day when a state of the North declares that the son of a slave will be born free, the slave loses a great part of his market value; for his posterity can no longer be part of the market, and again there is a great interest in transporting him to the South.

Thus the same law prevents slaves from the South from coming to the North and pushes those of the North toward the South.

But here is another cause more powerful than all those that I have just discussed.

As the number of slaves diminishes in a state, the need for free workers makes itself felt. As free workers take over industry, since the work of the slave is less productive, the slave becomes a second-rate or useless property, and again there is a great interest in exporting him to the South where competition is not to be feared.

So the abolition of slavery does not bring the slave to liberty; it only makes him change masters. From the north he passes to the south.

As for the emancipated Negroes and those who are born after slavery has been abolished, they do not leave the North to go to the South, but they find themselves vis-à-vis the Europeans in a position analogous to that of the natives; they remain half civilized and deprived of rights amid a population that is infinitely superior to them in wealth and enlightenment; they are exposed to the tyranny of laws[40] and to the intolerance of mores.[v] More unfortunate from a certain perspective than the Indians, they have against them the memories of slavery, and they cannot claim possession of a single piece of land; many succumb to their misery;[41] others concentrate in the cities where, undertaking the roughest work, they lead a precarious and miserable existence.

Since the number of whites is increasing at twice the rate after the abolition of slavery, Blacks would soon be as if swallowed up amid the waves of a foreign population, even if the number of Negroes continued to grow in the same way as in the period when they were not yet free.

40. *The states where slavery is abolished ordinarily attempt to make it quite difficult for free Negroes to stay in their territory; and since a sort of emulation among the different states is established on this point, the unfortunate Negroes can only choose among evils.*

v. Cf. Beaumont, *Marie,* I, pp. 161–65, 333–38.

41. *There is a great difference between the mortality of whites and that of Blacks in the states where slavery is abolished: from 1820 to 1831, in Philadelphia only one white died out of forty-two individuals belonging to the white race, while one Negro died there out of twenty-one individuals belonging to the Black race. Mortality is not so great by far among Negro slaves. (See* Emmerson's [Emerson's (ed.)] Medical Statistics, *p. 28.)*

A land cultivated by slaves is in general less populated than one cultivated by free men; America is, moreover, a new country; so at the moment when a state abolishes slavery, it is still only half full. Scarcely is servitude destroyed there and the need for free workers felt, than you see a crowd of hardy adventurers rushing in from all parts of the country; they come to profit from the new resources which are going to open to human industry. The land is divided among them; on each portion a family of whites settles and takes possession of it. It is also toward the free states that European emigration heads. What would the poor man of Europe do, coming to find comfort and happiness in the New World, if he went to inhabit a country where work was stained with shame?

Thus the white population grows by its natural movement and at the same time by an immense emigration, while the Black population does not receive emigrants and becomes weaker. Soon the proportion that existed between the two races is reversed. The Negroes form nothing more than unfortunate remnants, a small, poor and wandering tribe lost in the middle of an immense people, master of the land; and nothing more is noticed of their presence except the injustices and the rigors to which they are subjected.

In many of the states of the West the Negro race has never appeared; in all the states of the North it is disappearing. So the great question of the future is shrinking within a narrow circle; it thus becomes less formidable, but no easier to resolve.

The further south you go, the more difficult it is to abolish slavery usefully. This results from several material causes that must be developed.

This first is climate: it is certain that as Europeans approach the tropics work becomes proportionately more difficult for them; many Americans even claim that below a certain latitude it ends up becoming fatal to them, while the Negro submits to it without dangers;[42] but I do not think that

42. *This is true in the places where rice is cultivated. Rice plantations, which are unhealthy in all countries, are particularly dangerous in those that are struck by the burning sun of the tropics. Europeans would have a great deal of difficulty cultivating the land in this part of the New World, if they wanted to insist on making it produce rice. But can't one do without rice plantations?*

this idea, so favorable to the laziness of the man of the South, is based on experience. It is not hotter in the South of the Union than in the south of Spain or of Italy.[43] Why would the European not be able to accomplish the same work there? And if slavery was abolished in Italy and in Spain without having the masters perish, why wouldn't the same thing happen in the Union? So I do not believe that nature has forbidden the European of Georgia or of Florida, under pain of death, to draw their subsistence from the land themselves; but this work would assuredly be more painful and less productive for them than for the inhabitants of New England.[44] With the free worker in the South losing in this way a part of his superiority over the slave, it is less useful to abolish slavery.

All the plants of Europe grow in the North of the Union; the South has special products.

It has been noted that slavery is an expensive means to cultivate cereal crops. Whoever grows wheat in a country where servitude is unknown normally keeps in his service only a small number of workers; at harvest time and during planting he brings together many others, it is true; but the latter live at his place only temporarily.

To fill his warehouses or to sow his fields, the farmer who lives in a slave state is obliged to maintain throughout the entire year a great number of servants, whom he needs only during a few days; for, unlike free workers, slaves cannot, while working for themselves, wait for the moment when you must come to hire their labor. You must buy them in order to use them.

So slavery, apart from its general disadvantages, is naturally less applicable to countries where cereal crops are cultivated than to those where other products are harvested.

The cultivation of tobacco, cotton and, above all, sugar cane requires,

43. *These states are closer to the Equator than Italy and Spain, but the continent of America is infinitely colder than that of Europe.*

44. *Spain formerly had transported a certain number of peasants from the Azores into a district of Louisiana called Attakapas. Slavery was not introduced among them; it was an experiment. Today these men still cultivate the land without slaves; but their industry is so listless that it scarcely provides for their needs.*

on the contrary, constant attention. There you can employ women and children that you could not use in the cultivation of wheat. Thus slavery is naturally more appropriate to the country where the products that I have just named are grown.

Tobacco, cotton, sugar cane grow only in the South; there they form the principal sources of the wealth of the country. By destroying slavery the men of the South would find themselves with these alternatives: either they would be forced to change their system of cultivation, and then they would enter into competition with the men of the North, more active and more experienced than they; or they would cultivate the same products without slaves, and then they would have to bear the competition of the other states of the South that would have retained slaves.

Thus the South has particular reasons for keeping slavery that the North does not have.[w]

But here is another motive more powerful than all the others. The South would indeed be able, if really necessary, to abolish slavery; but how would the South rid itself of Blacks? In the North slavery and slaves are chased away at the same time. In the South you cannot hope to attain this double result at the same time.

While proving that servitude was more natural and more advantageous in the South than in the North, I showed sufficiently that the number of slaves must be much greater there. The first Africans were brought into the South; that is where they have always arrived in greater number. As you go further south, the prejudice that holds idleness in honor gains power. In the states that are closest to the tropics there is not one white man who works. So Negroes are naturally more numerous in the South than in the North. Each day, as I said above, they become more numerous; for, in proportion as slavery is destroyed at one end of the Union, Negroes accumulate in the other. Thus the number of Blacks is increasing in the South, not only by the natural movement of the population, but also by the forced

w. "Cultivation by slaves is infinitely less advantageous to the north than it was formerly for two reasons.

"The first that certain very costly products such as tobacco have fallen [in price].

"The second that the price of slaves has always remained very high because of New Orleans where they are very expensive" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 86).

emigration of the Negroes of the North. The African race, to grow in this part of the Union, has reasons analogous to those that make the European race increase so quickly in the North.

In the state of Maine there is one Negro for every three hundred inhabitants; in Massachusetts one for every one hundred; in the state of New York two for every one hundred; in Pennsylvania three; in Maryland thirty-four; forty-two in Virginia, and fifty-five finally in South Carolina.[45] Such was the proportion of Blacks in relation to whites in the year 1830. But this proportion changes constantly: every day it becomes smaller in the North and greater in the South.

It is clear that in the southernmost states of the Union you cannot abolish slavery as you have in the states of the North without running very great dangers that the latter did not have to fear.

We have seen how the states of the North carefully handled the transition between slavery and liberty. They keep the present generation in irons and free future races; in this way Negroes are introduced into society only little by little, and while the man who could make bad use of his independence is retained in servitude, the one who can still learn the art of being free, before becoming master of himself, is liberated.

It is difficult to apply this method to the South. When you declare that beginning at a certain time the son of the Negro will be free, you introduce the principle and the idea of liberty into the very heart of servitude; the Blacks who are kept in slavery by the legislator and who see their sons emerge from it are astonished by this unequal division that destiny makes between them; they become restless and angry. From that moment slavery has in their view lost the type of moral power that time and custom gave

45. *In the American work entitled* Letters on the Colonization Society, *by Carey, 1833, you read the following: "In South Carolina, for forty years, the Black race has been increasing faster than the white race. By combining the population of the five states of the South that first had slavery, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, you discover," Mr. Carey says again, "that from 1790 to 1830, whites have increased in the proportion of 80 per 100 in these states, and Blacks in the proportion of 112 per 100."*

In the United States, in 1830, the men belonging to the two races were distributed in the following manner: states where slavery is abolished, 6,565,434 whites, 120,520 Negroes. States where slavery still exists, 3,960,814 whites, 2,208,102 Negroes.

it; it is reduced to being nothing more than a visible abuse of force. [Thus the law that sets the son at liberty makes it more difficult to keep the father a slave.] The North had nothing to fear from this contrast, because in the North Blacks were small in number and whites very numerous. But if this first dawn of liberty came to break upon two million men at the same time, the oppressors would have to tremble.[x]

After emancipating the sons of their slaves, the Europeans of the South would soon be compelled to extend the same benefit to the entire Black race.

In the North, as I said above, from the moment when slavery is abolished, and even from the moment when it becomes probable that the time of its abolition is approaching, a double movement takes place. Slaves leave the country to be transported more to the South; whites of the northern states and the emigrants from Europe rush to take their place.

These two causes cannot work in the same way in the last states of the South. On the one hand, the mass of slaves is too great there to be able to

x. Tocqueville will study in detail the systems of emancipation in his parliamentary report on slavery (*Rapport fait au nom de la commission chargée d'examiner la proposition de M. de Tracy relative aux esclaves des colonies,* Paris: A. Henry, 1839, reproduced in *OC,* III, 1, pp. 41–78). The committee recommends that, after the immediate abolition of slavery in the French colonies, the State become the tutor of Blacks during a transition period by educating them and selling their work at a low price. The revenue will serve to amortize the indemnities to the former owners. Each of the emancipated will receive a minimal salary and a parcel of land from the State.

Tocqueville will defend the conclusions of the committee in a series of articles on abolition published in the *Siècle,* 22 and 28 October, 8 and 21 November, 6 and 14 December 1843 (reproduced in *Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, pp. 79–111). A few critics have noted that in his reflections on slavery Tocqueville allowed his nationalist ideas to prevail over his antislavery principles. See on this subject Seymour Drescher, *Dilemmas of Democracy: Tocqueville and Modernization,* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968; Melvin Richter, "Tocqueville on Algeria," *Review of Politics* 25, no. 3 (1963): 363–98; Irving M. Zeitlin, *Liberty, Equality and Revolution in Alexis de Tocqueville,* Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971.

In his novel Beaumont discusses in a little more detail the process of emancipation. Gradual emancipation seems to him too costly, and he is of the opinion that Jefferson's idea of giving a portion of the territory to emancipated Negroes is dangerous. The confrontation of the two races seems as inevitable to him as to Tocqueville. (Cf. *Marie,* I, pp. 314–38.)

hope to make them leave the country;[y] on the other hand, the Europeans and the Anglo-Americans of the North dread coming to live in a country where work has still not been rehabilitated. Moreover, they rightly regard the states where the proportion of Negroes surpasses or equals that of whites as threatened by great misfortunes, and they refrain from bringing their industry there.

Thus by abolishing slavery, the men of the South would not succeed, like their brethren of the North, in making Negroes arrive gradually at liberty; they would not appreciably diminish the number of Blacks, and to hold them in check they would be alone. So in the course of a few years you would see a great people of free Negroes placed in the middle of a more or less equal nation of whites.

The same abuses[z] of power that maintain slavery today would then become the source of the greatest dangers that whites in the South would have to fear. Today the descendant of Europeans alone possesses the land; he is the absolute master of industry; he alone is rich, enlightened, armed. The Black possesses none of these advantages; but he can do without them, he is a slave. Once free, charged with watching over his own fate, can he remain deprived of all these things without dying? So what made the strength of the white, when slavery existed, exposes him to a thousand perils after slavery is abolished.

Left in servitude, the Negro can be held in a state near that of the brute; free, he cannot be prevented from becoming educated enough to appreciate the extent of his ills and to catch sight of the remedy to them. There is, moreover, a singular principle of relative justice that is found very deeply buried in the human heart. Men are struck much more by the inequality that exists within the interior of the same class than by the inequalities that are noticed among different classes. Slavery is understood; but how to imag-

y. "In the South the mass of slaves is too considerable for anyone ever to hope of diminishing the number of them very noticeably by exportation. You must wait until death, by making them disappear little by little, removes them along with the just terrors to which they give rise.

Here is one side of the subject, let us envisage another [text interrupted (ed.)]" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 102).

z. The manuscript says: "The same causes."

ine the existence of several million citizens eternally bent down by infamy and given over to hereditary miseries? In the North a population of emancipated Negroes experiences these evils and feels these injustices; but it is weak and reduced; in the South it would be numerous and strong.

From the moment that you allow whites and emancipated Negroes to be placed on the same soil as peoples who are strangers to each other, you will understand without difficulty that there are only two possibilities in the future: Negroes and whites must either blend entirely or separate.

I have already expressed my conviction about the first means.[46] I do not think that the white race and the Black race will come to live on an equal footing anywhere.

But I believe that the difficulty will be even greater in the United States than anywhere else.[a] If a man happens to stand outside of the prejudices of religion, of country, of race, and this man is king, he can work surprising revolutions in society. An entire people cannot so to speak rise above itself in this way.

A despot coming to join the Americans and their former slaves under the same yoke would perhaps succeed in mixing them together; as long as the American democracy remains at the head of affairs, no one will dare to attempt such an undertaking, and you can anticipate that, the more the whites of the United States are free, the more they will seek to separate themselves.[47]

I said elsewhere that the true link between the European and the Indian was the half-breed; in the same way, the true transition between the white and the Negro is the mulatto. Wherever there is a very great number of mulattos, the fusion between the two races is not impossible.

46. *This opinion, moreover, is based on authorities much more weighty than I. In the* Mémoires de Jefferson, *among others, you read: "Nothing is more clearly written in the book of destiny than the emancipation of the Blacks, and it is just as certain that the two races equally free will not be able to live under the same government. Nature, habit and opinion have established insurmountable barriers between them." (See* Extrait des Mémoires de Jefferson, *by M. Conseil.)*

a. In the margin: "≠Of all governments those that have the least power over mores are free governments.≠"

47. *If the English of the Antilles had governed themselves, you can count on the fact that they would not have granted the act of emancipation that the mother country has just imposed.*

There are parts of America where the European and the Negro have so crossed that it is difficult to meet a man who is completely white or completely Black. Having reached this point, the two races can really be said to have mingled; or rather, in their place, a third has appeared that takes after the two without being precisely either the one or the other.

Of all Europeans the English are the ones who have least mingled their blood with that of the Negroes. You see more mulattos in the South of the Union than in the North, but infinitely fewer than in any other European colony. Mulattos are very few in the United States; they have no strength by themselves, and in the quarrels between the races they ordinarily make common cause with the whites. This is how in Europe you often see the lackeys of great lords put on nobility with the people.

This pride of origin, natural to the English, has been singularly increased further among the Americans by the individual pride given birth by democratic liberty. The white man of the United States is proud of his race and proud of himself.

Besides, since whites and Negroes do not come to mingle in the North of the Union, how would they mingle in the South? Can you suppose for one moment that the American of the South, placed as he will always be between the white man in all his physical and moral superiority and the Negro, can ever think of mixing with the latter? The American of the South has two energetic passions that will always lead him to separate himself: he will be afraid of resembling the Negro, his former slave, and of descending below the white, his neighbor.

If it were absolutely necessary to foretell the future, I would say that in the probable course of things the abolition of slavery in the South will make the repugnance that the white population feels there for the Blacks grow. I base this opinion on what I have already noted analogously in the North. I said that the white men of the North withdraw from Negroes all the more carefully as the legislator blurs the legal separation that should exist between them. Why would it not be the same in the South? In the North when whites are afraid of ending by blending with Blacks, they fear an imaginary

danger. In the South where the danger would be real, I cannot believe that the fear would be less.[b]

If, on the one hand, you recognize (and the fact is not doubtful) that in the extreme South Blacks are constantly accumulating and growing faster than whites; if, on the other hand, you concede that it is impossible to foresee the time when Blacks and whites will come to mingle and to draw the same advantages from the state of society, must you not conclude that in the states of the South Blacks and whites will sooner or later end by getting into a struggle?

What will the final result of this struggle be?

You will easily understand that on this point you must confine yourself to vague conjectures. With difficulty the human mind manages in a way to draw a great circle around the future; but within this circle chance, which escapes all efforts, is in constant motion. In the portrait of the future chance always forms the obscure point where the sight of intelligence cannot penetrate. What you can say is this: in the Antilles it is the white race that seems destined to succumb; on the continent, the Black race.

In the Antilles whites are isolated in the middle of an immense population of Blacks;[c] on the continent Blacks are placed between the sea and an innumerable people who already extend above them as a compact mass, from the frozen areas of Canada to the borders of Virginia, from the banks

b. These notes in the manuscript seem instead to be the plan for the rest of this section:

≠If he does not mingle, what? Examine the various possibilities. Here nothing dogmatic, no fear for the white race of America, on the contrary for the Black race. Perhaps they will separate? Perhaps they will wage a war of extermination? This is probable as long as the Union lasts because the South leans on the North.

Finally reason to preserve *slavery* and all its *rigors* for the good of the two races.

If the two races cannot blend together in the southernmost states of the Union, what then will be their fate? You easily understand that on this point you must necessarily confine yourself to vague conjectures. In all human events there is an immense portion abandoned to chance or to secondary causes that escapes entirely from forecasts and calculations.≠

c. "We have already seen the *whites destroyed* in the Antilles. Our sons will see the *Blacks destroyed* in most of the United States, this at the end of the successive retreat of Negroes toward the South" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 95).

of the Mississippi to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. If the whites of North America remain united, it is difficult to believe that Negroes can escape the destruction that threatens them; they will succumb by sword or misery. But the Black populations accumulated along the Gulf of Mexico have chances for salvation if the struggle between the two races comes about when the American confederation has dissolved. Once the federal link is broken, the men of the South would be wrong to count on lasting support from their brothers of the North. The latter know that the danger can never reach them; if a positive duty does not compel them to march to the aid of the South, you can foresee that the sympathies of race will be powerless.

Whatever the period of the struggle may be, the whites of the South left to themselves will moreover present themselves in the contest with an immense superiority of enlightenment and means; but the Blacks will have for them numbers and the energy of despair. Those are great resources when you have weapons in hand. Perhaps what happened to the Moors of Spain will then happen to the white race of the South [(something not very probable, it is true)]. After occupying the country for centuries, it will finally withdraw little by little toward the country from which its ancestors came in the past, abandoning to the Negroes the possession of a country that Providence seems to intend for the latter, since they live there without difficulty and work more easily there than whites.

The danger, more or less remote but inevitable, of a struggle between the Blacks and whites who populate the South of the Union presents itself constantly as a painful dream to the imagination of the Americans. The inhabitants of the North talk daily about these dangers, although they have nothing directly to fear from them. They seek in vain to find a means to ward off the misfortunes that they foresee.

In the states of the South the inhabitants are silent. They do not speak about the future with strangers; they avoid talking about it with friends; each person hides it so to speak from himself. The silence of the South has something more frightening about it than the noisy fears of the North.

This general preoccupation of minds has given birth to an almost unknown enterprise that can change the fate of one part of the human race.

Fearing the dangers that I have just described, a certain number of American citizens gather as a society with the goal of exporting at their expense to the coasts of Guinea the free Negroes who would like to escape the tyranny that weighs upon them.[48]

In 1820, the society that I am speaking about succeeded in founding in Africa, at 7 degrees of north latitude, a settlement to which it gave the name *Liberia.*[d] The latest news announced that two thousand five hundred Negroes were already gathered at this place. Transported to their former country, the Blacks have introduced American institutions there. Liberia has a representative system, Negro jurors, Negro magistrates, Negro priests; you see churches and newspapers there, and by a singular turn of the vicissitudes of this world whites are forbidden to settle within its walls.[49]

There certainly is a strange twist of fortune! Two centuries have passed since the day when the inhabitant of Europe undertook to carry Negroes from their family and their country to transport them to the shores of

48. *This society took the name Colonization Society of Blacks.*

See its annual reports, and notably the fifteenth. Also see the brochure already indicated entitled: Letters on the Colonization Society and On Its Probable Results, *by M. Carey, Philadelphia, April 1833.*

d. "You read in the *National Intelligencer* of 14 January 1834, a curious article on Liberia, from which it follows that at this period the colony had a newspaper entitled *Liberia Herald* which contained pieces on history and on ethics and a page of advertisements.

"See the letter addressed by Mr. Voorhead [*sic* (ed.)] captain of the ship *John Adams* to the Secretary of the Navy, published in the *National Intelligencer* of January 1834" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 75).

This is the letter of P. F. Voorhees in which he describes his visit to Monrovia. This letter was published on 13 February 1834 in the review cited. Tocqueville also seems to have found in the same newspaper information about the Bank and the division of federal territories.

A note from his pocket notebook 1 also shows that he thought about visiting the colony established by Negroes in Wilberforce, Canada: "Colony that the *colored men* are establishing at Wilberforce in upper Canada. It can be interesting to visit" (YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 153). The project was not accomplished.

49. *This last regulation has been penned by the founders of the settlement themselves. They were afraid that something analogous to what is happening on the frontiers of the United States would happen in Africa, and that the Negroes, like the Indians, entering into contact with a race more enlightened than theirs, would be destroyed before being able to become civilized.*

North America. Today you meet the European busy again carting the descendants of these very Negroes across the Atlantic Ocean in order to take them back to the land from which he had once uprooted their fathers. Barbarians have drawn the enlightenment of civilization from within servitude and have learned in slavery the art of being free.[e]

Until today Africa was closed to the arts and sciences of whites. The enlightenment of Europe, imported by Africans, will perhaps penetrate there. So there is a beautiful and great idea in the founding of Liberia; but the idea, which can become so fruitful for the Old World, is sterile for the New.

In twelve years the Society for the colonization of Blacks has transported to Africa two thousand five hundred Negroes. During the same time period, about seven hundred thousand of them were born in the United States.

If the colony of Liberia were in the position to receive each year thousands of new inhabitants, and the latter in a condition to be brought there usefully; if the Union took the place of the Society, and if annually it used its riches[50] and its ships to export Negroes to Africa, it still would not be able to balance just the natural increase of the population among the Blacks; and by not removing each year as many men as those born, it would not even manage to suspend the development of the evil that is growing each day in its bosom.[51]

The Negro race will no longer leave the shores of the American continent, where the passions and the vices of Europe made it come; it will disappear from the New World only by ceasing to exist. The inhabitants

e. Note in the manuscript: "{To civilization by stultification.}"

50. *Many other difficulties as well would be met in such an enterprise. If the Union, in order to transport Negroes from America to Africa, undertook to buy Blacks from those whose slaves they were, the price of Negroes increasing in proportion to their rarity would soon rise to enormous amounts, and it is inconceivable that the states of the North would consent to make such an expenditure, whose benefits they would not receive. If the Union removed the slaves of the South by force or acquired them at a low price set by the Union, it would create an insurmountable resistance among the states located in this part of the Union. From the two sides you end up at the impossible.*

51. *In 1830, there were in the United States 2,010,527 slaves, and 319,467 emancipated; in all 2,329,994 Negroes; which formed a little more than one fifth of the total population of the United States in the same period.*

of the United States can postpone the misfortunes that they fear, but they cannot today destroy the cause of them.

I am obliged to admit that I do not consider the abolition of slavery as a means to delay in the states of the South the struggle of the two races.[f]

The Negroes can remain slaves for a long time without complaining; but once among the number of free men, they will soon become indignant about being deprived of nearly all the rights of citizens; and not able to become the equals of whites, they will not take long to prove to be their enemies.

In the North emancipating the slaves was all profit; you rid yourself in this way of slavery, without having anything to fear from free Negroes. The latter were too few ever to claim their rights. It is not the same in the South.

The question of slavery was for the masters in the North a commercial and manufacturing question; in the South it is a question of life or death. So you must not confuse slavery in the North and in the South.

God keep me from trying, like certain American authors, to justify the principle of the servitude of Negroes; I am only saying that all those who have allowed this painful principle in the past are not equally free to abandon it today.

I confess that when I consider the state of the South, I discover for the white race that inhabits these countries only two ways to act: to free the Negroes and combine with them; to remain separated from them and hold them in slavery as long as possible.[g] The middle terms seem to me to lead shortly to the most horrible of all civil wars, and perhaps to the ruin of one of the two races.

The Americans of the South envisage the question from this point of view, and they act accordingly. Not wanting to blend together with the Negroes, they do not want to set them free.

f. "I admit that if I had the misfortune to live in a country where slavery had been introduced and I had the liberty of the Negroes in my hand, I would keep myself from opening it" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 86).

g. Beaumont reached the same conclusion in *Marie,* I, pp. 294–301.

It is not that all the inhabitants of the South regard slavery as necessary to the wealth of the master; on this point many among them agree with the men of the North, and readily admit with the latter that servitude is an evil; but they think that this evil must be maintained in order to live.

Enlightenment, by increasing in the South, made the inhabitants of this part of the territory see that slavery is harmful to the master, and this same enlightenment shows them, more clearly than they had seen until then, the near impossibility of destroying it. A singular contrast results. Slavery becomes established more and more in the laws, as its usefulness is more disputed; and while its principle is gradually abolished in the North, in the South more and more rigorous consequences are drawn from this very principle.

Today the legislation of the states of the South relative to slaves presents a kind of unheard of atrocity, and by itself alone it reveals some profound disturbance in the laws of humanity. It is enough to read the legislation of the states of the South to judge the desperate position of the two races that inhabit them.

It is not that the Americans of this part of the Union have exactly increased the rigors of servitude; they have, on the contrary, made the physical lot of the slaves milder. The ancients knew only chains and death to maintain slavery; the Americans of the South of the Union have found more intellectual guarantees for the continuance of their power. They have, if I many express myself in this way, spiritualized despotism and violence. In antiquity they tried to prevent the slave from breaking his chains; today we have undertaken to remove his desire to do so.

The ancients chained the body of the slave, but they left his mind free and allowed him to become enlightened. In that they were consistent with themselves; then slavery had a natural way out: from one day to another the slave could become free and equal to his master.

The Americans of the South, who do not think that at any time the Negroes can blend with them, have forbidden, under severe penalties,

teaching them to read and write.[h] Not wanting to raise them to their level, they hold them as close as possible to the brute.[j]

In all times the hope for liberty had been placed within slavery in order to soften its rigors.

The Americans of the South have understood that emancipation always presented dangers when the emancipated person could not one day come to be assimilated with the master. To give a man liberty and leave him in misery and disgrace, that is to do what, if not to provide a future leader of a slave revolt? It had already been noted for a long time, moreover, that the presence of the free Negro cast a vague restlessness deep within the soul of those who were not free, and made the idea of their rights penetrate their soul like an uncertain glimmer. The Americans of the South have in most cases removed from the masters the ability to emancipate.[52]

I met in the South[k] of the Union an old man who formerly had lived in an illegitimate union with one of his Negro women. He had had several children with her, who coming into the world became slaves of their father. Several times the latter had thought to bequeath them at least liberty, but years had gone by before he was able to overcome the obstacles raised to emancipation by the legislator. During this time old age came, and he was about to die. He then imagined his sons led from market to market and passing from paternal authority to the rod of a stranger. These horrible images threw his dying imagination into delirium. I saw him prey to the agonies of despair, and I then understood how nature knew how to avenge the wounds done to it by laws.

These evils are awful, without doubt; but are they not the foreseeable and necessary consequence of the very principle of servitude among modern peoples?

h. To the side, with a note: "≠(Verify this). See *National Intelligencer,* December 1833. South Carolina.≠" Possible reference to a speech by O'Connell, delivered on the occasion of an antislavery meeting, and reproduced in the number for 5 December 1833 of this review. See note c of p. 548.

j. "Blacks are a foreign nation that you have conquered and to whom you give a nationality and the means of resistance by emancipating them or even by enlightening them" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 98).

52. *Emancipation is not forbidden, but subjected to formalities that make it difficult.*

k. In a variant, he specifies that the story took place in North Carolina.

From the moment when Europeans took their slaves from within a race of men different from their own, that many among them considered as inferior to other human races, and with which all envisaged with horror the idea of ever assimilating, they supposed slavery to be eternal; for, between the extreme inequality that servitude creates and the complete equality that independence naturally produces among men, there is no intermediate lasting state. The Europeans vaguely sensed this truth, but without admitting it. Every time it concerned Negroes, you saw the Europeans obey sometimes their interest or their pride, sometimes their pity. Toward the Black they violated all the rights of humanity, and then they instructed him in the value and inviolability of these rights. They opened their ranks to their slaves, and when the latter attempted to enter, they chased them away in disgrace. Wanting servitude, the Europeans allowed themselves to be led despite themselves or without their knowing toward liberty, without having the courage of being either completely iniquitous or entirely just.

If it is impossible to foresee a period when the Americans of the South will mix their blood with that of the Negroes, can they, without exposing themselves to perishing, allow the latter to attain liberty? And if, in order to save their own race, they are obliged to want to keep them in chains, must you not excuse them for taking the most effective means to succeed in doing so?

What is happening in the South of the Union seems to me at the very same time the most horrible and the most natural consequence of slavery. When I see the order of nature overturned, when I hear humanity cry out and struggle in vain under the laws, I admit that I do not find the indignation to condemn the men of today, authors of these outrages; but I summon up all of my hatred against those who after more than a thousand years of equality introduced servitude again into the world.

Whatever the efforts of the Americans of the South to keep slavery, moreover, they will not succeed forever. Slavery, squeezed into a single point of the globe, attacked by Christianity as unjust, by political economy as fatal; slavery, amid the democratic liberty and the enlightenment of our age, is not an institution that can endure. It will end by the deed of the slave or by that of the master. In both cases, great misfortunes must be expected.

If you refuse liberty to the Negroes of the South, they will end by seizing it violently themselves; if you grant it to them, they will not take long to abuse it.

What Are the Chances for the American Union to Last? What Dangers Threaten It?[m]

What makes preponderant strength reside in the states rather than in the Union.—The confederation will last only as long as all the states that make it up want to be part of it.—Causes that should lead them to remain united.—Utility of being united in order to resist foreigners and in order not to have foreigners in America.—Providence has not raised natural barriers between the different states.—There are no material interests that divide them.—Interest that the North has in the prosperity and union of the South and of the West; the South with those of the North and of the West; the West with those of the other two.—Non-material interests that unite the Americans.—Uniformity of opinions.—Dangers to the confederation arise from the difference in the characters of the men who compose it and in their passions.—Characters of the men of the South and of the North.—Rapid growth is one of the greatest perils of the Union.—March of the population toward the northwest.—Gravitation of power in this direction.—Passions to which these rapid movements of fortune give birth.—The Union subsisting, does its government tend to gain strength or to become weaker?—Various signs of weakening.—Internal improvements.— Uninhabited lands.—Indians.—Affair of the Bank.—Affair of the tariff.—General Jackson.

The maintenance of what exists in each one of the states that compose the Union depends in part on the existence of the Union. So it is necessary to

m. Original title: FUTURE OF THE EUROPEANS WHO INHABIT THE UNITED STATES.

examine first what the probable fate of the Union is. But first of all it is good to settle on one point; if the current confederation came to break up, it seems to me incontestable that the states that are part of it would not return to their original individuality. In place of one Union, several of them would form. I do not intend to try to find out on what bases these new Unions would come to be established; what I want to show are the causes that can lead to the dismemberment of the current confederation.

To succeed I am going to be obliged to go over again some of the roads that I have previously traveled. I will have to review several subjects that are already known. I know that by acting in this way I am exposing myself to the reproaches of the reader; but the importance of the matter that remains for me to treat is my excuse. I prefer to repeat myself sometimes than not to be understood, and I prefer to harm the author rather than the subject.

The law-makers who drew up the Constitution of 1789 tried hard to give the federal power a separate existence and a preponderant strength.

But they were limited by the very conditions of the problem that they had to resolve. They had not been charged with constituting the government of a single people, but with regulating the association of several peoples; and whatever their desires, they always had to end up dividing the exercise of sovereignty.

[≠In this division the law-makers of the Union found themselves still enclosed in a circle out of which they were not free to go.

The conditions of the division were fixed in advance and by the very nature of things. To the Union reverted the direction of all general interests, to the states the government of all special [v: provincial] interests.

The portion of the Union in this division of sovereignty seems at first view greater than that of the states; and in actual fact it is the smallest.

The general interests of the country touch its inhabitants only from time to time. The interests of locality, every day. The government of the Union has more power than that of the states, but you rarely feel it act. The provincial government does smaller things, but it never rests. The one assures the independence and the greatness of the country, something that does not immediately touch upon individual well-being; the other regulates liberty, fortune, life, the entire future of each citizen.

So true political life is found in the state and not in the Union. Americans

are attached to the Union by principle, to their state by sentiment and by instinct. They must in a way rise above themselves in order to sustain federal sovereignty against that of the states.≠][n]

In order to understand well what the consequences of the division were, it is necessary to make a short distinction between the acts of sovereignty.

There are matters that are national by their nature, that is to say that are related only to the nation taken as a body, and can be confided only to the men or to the assembly that represents most completely the entire nation. I will put in this number war and diplomacy.

There are others that are provincial by their nature, that is to say that are related to certain localities and can be appropriately treated only in the locality itself. Such is the budget of towns.

Finally, matters are found that have a mixed nature: they are national in that they interest all of the individuals who make up the nation; they are provincial in that there is no necessity that the nation itself provides for it. These are, for example, the rights that regulate the civil and political state of the citizens. There is no social state without civil and political rights. So these rights interest all citizens equally; but it is not always necessary to the existence and to the prosperity of the nation that these rights be uniform, and consequently that they be regulated by the central power.

So among the matters that sovereignty deals with,[o] there are two nec-

n. In the margin: "≠The nationality of the Union is an opinion, the nationality of the states, a sentiment.

"The real strength of society is in the state not in the Union.≠"

In another place on the same page: "≠Thus interests, habits, sentiments combine to concentrate true political life in the states.≠"

o. What must be understood by the word *sovereignty* and the words *right of sovereignty.*/

The sovereign power, always a *single* being.

The sovereign power.—The *people.*

Acts of sovereignty.—*All acts whatever of the public authority.*

Authors of these acts.—*The sovereign power delegates the power to do these acts either to one single individual or to several. It puts these acts in whatever categories it pleases.*

essary categories; you find them again in all well-constituted societies, whatever the base, moreover, on which the social pact has been established.

Between these two extreme points are placed, like a floating mass, general but non-national matters that I have called mixed. Since these matters are neither exclusively national nor entirely provincial, the care of providing for them can be attributed to the national government or to the provincial government, following the conventions of those who are becoming associated, without missing the purpose of the association.

Most often simple individuals unite in order to form the sovereign power and their combination makes up a people. Above the general government they have given themselves you then find only individual strengths or collective powers, each of which represents a very minimal fraction of the sovereign power. Then as well it is the general government that is most naturally called to regulate not only matters national by their essence, but the greatest portion of the mixed matters that I already mentioned. The localities are reduced to the portion of sovereignty that is indispensable to their well-being.

Sometimes, by a fact prior to the association, the sovereign power is composed of already organized political bodies; then it happens that the provincial government takes charge of providing not only for the matters exclusively provincial by their nature, but also for all or part of the mixed

Theoretical division of acts.—*Principal acts, lesser acts* depending on whether they interest directly the whole or the parts of the sovereign power when, by an order of things prior to the association, the sovereign power is composed of *individuals* and is consequently represented by a single people.

Practical consequence.—When the sovereign power delegates the exercise of all the principal acts to the same person (man or assembly), tendency that this man or assembly gathers all the others.

When it delegates the exercise of principal acts to several, contrary tendency.

Another consequence. When the sovereign power is composed of *individuals,* tendency to gather the exercise of all the principal acts into the same hands, into what others?

When composed of nations, contrary tendency.

Single people goes to despotism, confederation to anarchy.

Fears of the French of dismemberment, absurd.

Id. of the Americans of consolidation.

After the theory, make this perceptible in practice (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 75–77).

matters of which it was just a question. This is because the confederated nations, which were themselves sovereign powers before their union, and which, although they are united, continue to represent a very considerable fraction of the sovereign power, intended to cede to the general government only the exercise of the rights indispensable to the union.[p]

When the national government, apart from the prerogatives inherent in its nature, finds itself vested with the right to regulate the mixed matters of sovereignty, it possesses a preponderant strength. Not only does it have many rights, but all the rights that it does not have are at its mercy, and it is to be feared that it will go so far as to take away from the provincial governments their natural and necessary prerogatives.[*]

When it is, on the contrary, the provincial government that finds itself vested with the right to regulate the mixed matters, an opposite tendency reigns in society. Preponderant strength then resides in the province, not

p. Each isolated individual has an absolute right over himself, right that has no limit in the material world except his strength, in the moral world except justice and reason.

A people, which is a collection of individuals, possesses a right of the same nature. This right then takes the name of sovereignty.

≠The people, taking this term in the sense not of a class but of all the classes of citizens, the people.≠

Every time an independent people acts and in whatever manner it acts, it does an act of sovereignty. ≠So you would try in vain to establish a distinction among the acts of public authority between those that are due essentially to the right of sovereignty and those that are not inherent to it. What you can do is to distinguish between the most and the least important of the habitual actions of the sovereign power.≠

The sovereign power delegates a part or the totality of the exercise of its power either to a man or to several.

But all the acts of the public authority, whatever they may be, derive from the expressed or presumed will of the sovereign power. Sovereignty can have a multitude of agents, but there is always only one sovereign power.

[In the margin] A people, an association of peoples, always represents a unique individual. Sovereignty can have a multitude of agents, but there is always only one sovereign power, just as in one man there is always only one will applied to different objects and served by different organs (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 82–84).

[*]. The central government of France possesses the right to act in everything in the name of the nation and the right to regulate all matters of internal administration that have a general character. These are immense prerogatives but it [they (ed.)] are not enough for it and it uses the strength that they give to it to direct the use of communal funds and to interfere in [interrupted text (ed.)].

in the nation; and you must fear that the national government will end up being stripped of privileges necessary to its existence.[q]

So single peoples are naturally led toward centralization, and confederations toward dismemberment.[r]

It only remains to apply these general ideas to the American Union.

To the particular states reverted inevitably the right to regulate purely provincial matters.

In addition these same states retained that of fixing the civil and political capacity of citizens, of regulating the relationships of men with each other, and of administering justice to them; rights that are general in their nature, but that do not necessarily belong to the national government.

We have seen that to the government of the Union was delegated the power to command in the name of the entire nation in cases where the nation would have to act as one and the same individual. It represented the nation vis-à-vis foreigners; it led the common forces against the common enemy. In a word it was concerned with matters that I have called exclusively national.

In this division of the rights of sovereignty the part of the Union still seems at first glance greater than that of the states; a slightly more thorough examination demonstrates that in fact it is less.

q. I cannot prevent myself from thinking that the men in America who fear the encroachments of the central government confuse two essentially distinct things: complete and incomplete sovereignty.

In countries where sovereignty is not divided, and where the provinces administer themselves and do not govern themselves, town [v: provincial] liberties are always in danger. The natural tendency of society is to concentrate strength at the center and it is only by a constant effort that provincial liberties are maintained.

But in a State [v: country] where sovereignty is divided, the greatest strength finding itself placed in the extremities not at the center, the tendency of the society is to split up and it is only with effort that it remains united. Consequently you have seen nearly all the States where (illegible word) sovereignty was undivided finish [by (ed.)] arriving at administrative despotism and the confederations at anarchy (YTC, CVh, 2, pp. 48–49).

r. "The natural tendency of a people, if you do not oppose it, is to concentrate social forces indefinitely until you arrive at pure administrative despotism. The natural tendency of confederations is to divide these forces indefinitely until you arrive at dismemberment" (YTC, CVh, 1, p. 78).

[≠The Union is an almost imaginary being that is not easily apparent to the senses≠.]

The government of the Union executes more vast enterprises, but you rarely feel it act. The provincial government does smaller things, but it never rests and reveals its existence at each instant.

The government of the Union watches over the general interests of the country; but the general interests of a people have only a debatable influence on individual happiness.

The affairs of the province, in contrast, visibly influence the well-being of those who inhabit it.

The Union assures the independence and the greatness of the nation, things that do not immediately touch individuals. The state maintains the liberty, regulates the rights, guarantees the fortune, assures the life, the entire future of each citizen.

The federal government is placed at a great distance from its subjects; the provincial government is within reach of all. It is enough to raise your voice in order to be heard by it. The central government has for it the passions of a few superior men who aspire to lead it; on the side of the provincial government is found the interest of second-rate men who only hope to obtain power in their state; and it is these who, placed near the people, exercise the most power over them.

So the Americans have much more to expect and to fear from the state than from the Union; and following the natural march of the human heart, they must be attached much more intensely to the first than to the second.

[≠But men, whatever you say, are not led only by interests; they obey habits and sentiments.≠

{True patriotism remained with the state and did not pass to the Union. The state has an ancient existence, the Union is comparatively a new thing.}]

In this habits and sentiments are in agreement with interests.

When a compact nation divides its sovereignty and reaches the state of confederation, memories, customs, habits struggle for a long time against the laws and give the central government a strength that the latter deny it. When confederated peoples unite in a single sovereignty, the same causes act in the opposite direction. I do not doubt that if France became a con-

federated republic like that of the United States, the government would at first show itself to be more energetic than that of the Union; and if the Union constituted itself as a monarchy like France, I think that the American government would remain for some time weaker than ours. At the moment when national life was created among the Anglo-Americans, provincial existence was already old, necessary relationships were established between the towns and individuals of the same states; you were accustomed there to considering certain matters from a common point of view, and to dealing exclusively with certain enterprises as representing a special interest.[s]

The Union is an immense body that offers to patriotism a vague object to embrace. The state has settled forms and circumscribed limits; it represents a certain number of things known and dear to those who inhabit it. It blends with the very image of the land, is identified with property, with family, with memories of the past, with the work of the present, with dreams of the future. So patriotism, which most often is only an extension of individual egoism, has remained with the state and has not so to speak passed to the Union.

Thus interests, habits, and sentiments unite to concentrate true political life in the state, and not in the Union.

You can easily judge the difference in the strength of the two governments by seeing each of them move within the circle of its power.

Every time that a state government addresses itself to a man or to an

s. Among the causes that can hasten the dismemberment of the Union in the first rank is found the state of weakness and inertia into which the federal government would fall, if the central power came to this degree of feebleness that it could no longer serve as arbiter among the different provincial interests and could not effectively defend the confederation against foreigners; its usefulness would become doubtful, and the Union would no longer exist except on paper; and each state would tend to separate itself from it in order to find its strength in itself.

So it is very important, granting the fact of the Union, to try to find out if the federal government tends to gain or to lose power.

The question of the strength and of the weakness of the federal government, important moreover in itself and separate from the question of the duration of the Union, would still be important; for the strength or the weakness of the federal government, even if it had no influence on the duration of the Union, would necessarily have an influence on prosperity and its progress (YTC, CVh, 1, pp. 80–81).

association of men its language is clear and imperative; it is the same with the federal government when it is speaking to individuals; but as soon as it finds itself facing a state, it begins to talk at length: it explains its motives and justifies its conduct; it argues, advises, hardly ever commands. If doubts arise about the limits of the constitutional powers of each government, the provincial government claims its right with boldness and takes prompt and energetic measures to sustain it. During this time the government of the Union reasons; it appeals to the good sense of the nation, to its interests, to its glory; it temporizes, negotiates; only when reduced to the last extremity does it finally determine to act. At first view you could believe that it is the provincial government that is armed with the strength of the whole nation and that Congress represents a state.

So the federal government, despite the efforts of those who constituted it, is, as I have already said elsewhere, by its very nature a weak government that more than any other needs the free support of the governed in order to subsist.

It is easy to see that its object is to realize with ease the will that the states have to remain united. This first condition fulfilled, it is wise, strong and agile. It has been organized in such a way as usually to encounter only individuals before it and to overcome easily the resistance that some would like to oppose to the common will; but the federal government has not been established with the expectation that the states or several among them would cease to want to be united.

If the sovereignty of the Union today entered into a struggle with that of the states, you can easily foresee that it would succumb; I doubt even that the battle would ever be engaged in a serious way.[t] Every time that an obstinate resistance is put up against the federal government, you will see

t. What singularly favors the *Union* is that all the confederated states have reached more or less the same *degree* of civilization and the same *type* of civilization. They are thus *naturally* more suited for working together than a single nation whose parts would not be perfectly homogeneous on this point.

The lack of homogeneity on this point, which hinders the government of a single nation, is particularly contrary to a confederation because there the differences between the ideas and the mores of diverse populations find a *legal* expression and strength.

it yield. Experience has proven until now that when a state stubbornly wanted something and demanded it resolutely, the state never failed to obtain it; and that when it clearly refused to act,[53] it was left free to do so.

If the government of the Union had a force of its own, the physical situation of the country would make the use of it very difficult.[54]

The United States covers an immense territory; long distances separate the states; the population is spread over a country still half wilderness. If the Union undertook by arms to hold the confederated states to their duty,

What will perhaps always prevent Switzerland from forming a very really united country, is that the differences between the civilization of the *cantons* is striking. The difference between the *canton* of Vaud and that of Appenzell is like that between the XIXth century and the XVth.

The central government in confederations is always by its nature weaker than the governments of States (for many reasons), but that is above all true when it is not an active sovereignty that is being carved up, but several sovereignties that are merging. In this case the memories, habits, interests struggle for a long time in the *opposite direction* against the laws. The central government would for a long time remain very much stronger in France than in the United States, even if France would become a federated republic. The central government of the United States will for a long time remain weaker than the current government of France, even if the Union would become a monarchy. When national life was created among the Anglo-Americans.

Federal government.

Union requires in order to subsist rare simplicity of mores or of needs, or very advanced civilization.

Weakness of the Union proven by facts.

1. All the *amendments* to the Constitution have been made in order to restrict federal power. The federal government abandoned in practice certain of its prerogatives and took no new ones. Every time that the state resolutely stood up to the Union, it more or less gained what it wanted.

1. Georgia in 1793 refusing to obey the decision of the Supreme Court. See Kent, volume 1, p. 278.

2. Rebellion in Pennsylvania against the whiskey tax (YTC, CVh, 2, pp. 79–80).

53. *See the conduct of the states of the North in the War of 1812. "During this war," Jefferson says in a letter of 17 [14 (ed.)] March 1817 to General Lafayette, "four of the eastern states were no longer tied to the Union except as dead bodies to living men" (*Correspondance de Jefferson, *published by Conseil) [vol. II, pp. 296–97 (ed.)].*

54. *The state of peace in which the Union finds itself gives it no pretext for having a permanent army. Without a permanent army, a government has nothing prepared in advance in order to take advantage of the favorable moment, to overcome resistance, and to take sovereign power by surprise.*

its position would be analogous to that of England at the time of the War of Independence.

Moreover, a government, were it strong, could only with difficulty escape the consequences of a principle, once it accepted that principle itself as the foundation of the public law that is to govern it. The confederation has been formed by the free will of the states; the latter by uniting did not lose their nationality and did not merge into one and the same people. If today one of these very states wanted to withdraw its name from the contract, it would be quite difficult to prove that it could not do so. The federal government, in order to combat it, would not rely in a clear way on either force or law.

For the federal government to triumph easily over the resistance that a few of its subjects might put up, it would be necessary for the particular interest of one or of several of them to be intimately linked to the existence of the Union, as has often been seen in the history of confederations.

I suppose that, among these states that the federal bond gathers together, there are some that alone enjoy the principal advantages of union, or whose prosperity depends entirely on the fact of union; it is clear that the central power will find in them a very great support for maintaining the others in obedience. But then it will no longer draw its strength from itself, it will draw it from a principle that is contrary to its nature. Peoples confederate only to gain equal advantages from union, and in the case cited above the federal government is strong because inequality reigns among the united nations.

I suppose again that one of the confederated states has gained a preponderance great enough to take hold of the central power by itself alone; it will consider the other states as its subjects and, in the alleged sovereignty of the Union, will make its own sovereignty respected. Then great things will be done in the name of the federal government, but truly speaking this government will no longer exist.[55]

In these two cases the power that acts in the name of the confederation

55. *In this way, the province of Holland in the republic of the Netherlands and the emperor in the German Confederation sometimes put themselves in the place of the Union, and exploited the federal power in their particular interest.*

becomes that much stronger the more you move away from the natural state and the acknowledged principle of confederations.

In America the present union is useful to all the states, but it is essential to none. If several states broke the federal bond, the fate of the others would not be compromised, even though the sum of their happiness would be less. Just as there is no state whose existence or prosperity is entirely[u] linked to the present union, neither is there one that is disposed to make very great personal sacrifices to preserve it.

From another perspective, no state is seen for now to have, out of ambition, a great interest in maintaining the confederation as we see it today. All undoubtedly do not exercise the same influence in federal councils, but there is not one of them that should flatter itself about dominating them and that can treat the other confederated states as inferiors or subjects.

So it seems to me certain that if one portion of the Union wanted seriously to separate from the other, not only would you not be able to prevent it from doing so, but you would not even be tempted to try. So the present Union will last only as long as all the states that compose it continue to want to be part of it.

This point settled, we are now more at ease: it is no longer a matter of trying to find out if the states currently confederated will be able to separate, but if they will want to remain united.

Among all the reasons that make the present union useful to the Americans, you find two principal ones whose evidence easily strikes everyone.

Although the Americans are so to speak alone on their continent, commerce gives them as neighbors all the peoples with whom they traffic. So despite their apparent isolation, the Americans need to be strong, and they can only be strong by remaining united.

The states by dividing would not only diminish their strength vis-à-vis foreigners, they would create foreigners on their own soil. From that moment they would enter into a system of internal customs; they would divide valleys by imaginary lines; they would imprison the course of rivers and

u. The published text says "entirely," while the manuscript says "intimately," a word that seems to work better.

hinder in all ways the exploitation of the immense continent that God granted them as their domain.

Today they have no invasion to fear, consequently no army to maintain, no taxes to levy [no military despotism to fear]; if the Union came to break apart, the need for all these things would perhaps not take long to make itself felt.

So the Americans have an immense interest in remaining united.

From another perspective it is nearly impossible to discover what type of material interest one portion of the Union would have, for now, to separate from the others.

When you cast your eyes over a map of the United States and you see the chain of the Allegheny Mountains running from the Northeast to the Southwest and covering the country over an expanse of 400 leagues, you are tempted to believe that the purpose of Providence was to raise between the Mississippi basin and the coasts of the Atlantic Ocean one of those natural barriers that, opposing the permanent relationships of men with each other, form like necessary limits to different peoples.

But the average height of the Allegheny Mountains does not surpass 800 meters.[56] Their rounded summits and the spacious valleys that they enclose within their contours present easy access in a thousand places. There is more. The principal rivers that come to empty their waters into the Atlantic Ocean, the Hudson, the Susquehanna, the Potomac, have their sources beyond the Allegheny Mountains on the open plateau that borders the Mississippi basin. Leaving this region[57] they come out through the rampart that seemed as though it should throw them back toward the west and, once within the mountains, trace natural routes always open to men.

So no barrier is raised between the different parts of the country occupied today by the Anglo-Americans. The Allegheny Mountains are far from serving as limits to peoples; they do not even mark the boundaries of states.

56. *Average height of the Allegheny Mountains according to Volney (*Tableau des États-Unis, *p. 33), 700 to 800 meters; 5,000 to 6,000 feet, according to Darby; the greatest height of the Vosges is 1,400 meters above sea level.*

57. *See* View of the United States, *by Darby, pp. 64 and 79.*

New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia enclose them within their precincts and extend as far to the west as to the east of these mountains.[58]

The territory occupied today by the twenty-four states of the Union and the three great districts that are not yet placed among the number of states, although they already have inhabitants, covers an area of 131,144 square leagues,[59] that is to say that it already presents a surface almost equal to five times that of France.[*] In these limits are found a varied soil, different temperatures, and very diverse products.

This great expanse of territory occupied by the Anglo-American republics has given birth to doubts about the maintenance of their union. Here distinctions must be made: conflicting interests are sometimes created in the different provinces of a vast empire and end up coming into conflict; then it happens that the great size of the State is what most compromises its duration. But if the men who cover this vast territory do not have conflicting interests among themselves, its very expanse must be useful to their prosperity, for the unity of government singularly favors the exchange that can be made with the different products of the soil, and by making their flow easier, it increases their value.

Now, I clearly see different interests in the different parts of the Union, but I do not find any that conflict with each other.

The states of the South are nearly exclusively agricultural; the states of the North are particularly manufacturing and commercial; the states of the West are at the same time manufacturing and agricultural. In the South tobacco, rice, cotton and sugar are harvested; in the North and in the West, corn and wheat. These are the diverse sources of wealth. But in order to draw upon these sources, there is a means common and equally favorable to all; it is the Union.[w]

58. *The chain of the Allegheny Mountains is not higher than that of the Vosges and does not offer as many obstacles as the latter to the efforts of human industry. So the countries situated on the eastern slope of the Allegheny Mountains are as naturally linked to the Valley of the Mississippi as Franche-Comté, upper Burgundy and Alsace are to France.*

59. *1,002,600 square miles. See* View of the United States, *by Darby, p. 435.*

[*]. France, according to Malte-Brun, volume VIII, p. 178, has an area of 26,739 square leagues.

w. These ideas appear in two letters of Carey published in the *National Intelligencer* of 28 and 31 December 1833. Tocqueville more than likely became aware of them.

The North, which carries the riches of the Anglo-Americans to all parts of the world and the riches of the world into the Union, has a clear interest in having the confederation continue to exist as it is today, so that the number of American producers and consumers that it is called to serve remains the greatest possible. The North is the most natural middleman between the south and the west of the Union, on the one hand, and the rest of the world, on the other; so the North should want the South and the West to remain united and prosperous so that they provide raw materials for its manufacturing and cargo for its ships.

The South and the West have on their side a still more direct interest in the preservation of the Union and the prosperity of the North. The products of the South are in large part exported overseas; so the South and the West need the commercial resources of the North. They should want the Union to have a great maritime power in order to be able to protect them effectively. The South and the West should contribute willingly to the costs of a navy, although they do not have ships; for if the fleets of Europe came to blockade the ports of the South and the Mississippi delta, what would become of the rice of the Carolinas, the tobacco of Virginia, the sugar and cotton that grow in the valleys of the Mississippi? So there is not a portion of the federal budget that does not apply to the preservation of a material interest common to all the confederated states.

[To clarify this subject even more I want to make a comparison drawn from France.

Provence gathers oil and Flanders harvests wheat; Burgundy produces wine and Normandy raises livestock. Do these different provinces find in the diversity of products reasons to hate each other? Isn't [it (ed.)] on the contrary the diversity of these products that gives them a common interest in remaining united in order to exchange them more freely?

Georgia seems to me to have the same reasons to remain united with Massachusetts as Provence with Flanders, and Ohio appears to me as naturally linked to the state of New York as Burgundy to Normandy.][x]

x. In a first version:

≠It is not in the interests but in the passions[1] of the Americans that you must seek the causes of ruin that threaten the American Union.

Apart from this commercial utility, the South and the West of the Union find a great political advantage in remaining united with each other and with the North.

The South encloses in its bosom an immense population of slaves, a population threatening at present, still more threatening in the future.

The states of the West occupy the bottom of a single valley. The rivers that water the territory of these states, originating from the Rocky or the Allegheny Mountains, all come to mingle their waters with that of the Mississippi and flow with it toward the Gulf of Mexico. The states of the West are entirely isolated by their position from the traditions of Europe and the civilization of the Old World.

So the inhabitants of the South should desire to preserve the Union in order not to live alone in the face of the Blacks, and the inhabitants of the West, in order not to find themselves enclosed within the central part of America without free communication with the world.

The North for its part should want the Union not to divide, in order to remain as the link that joins this great body to the rest of the world.

So there exists a tight bond among the material interests of all parts of the Union.

I will say as much for the opinions and the sentiments that you could call the non-material interests of man.

The inhabitants of the United States speak a great deal about their love

What most compromises the fate of the Union is its very prosperity, is the rapid growth of some parts.≠

The states that adhere to . . .

1. ≠This is clearly seen. The south, which has the greatest need to remain united, gives signs of impatience. The north and the west, which could by themselves alone form an immense republic, most want the union.

If interests alone were sufficient to maintain the Americans in the Union, there would be no portion of the United States where the federal Constitution had warmer adherents than in the south.

The south needs the north not only to guarantee the importation of its products, but also to defend it from the Negroes who live in its bosom.

The Americans of the south are, however, the only ones who threaten to break the federal bond.

So you must seek reasons other than those taken from interests properly speaking.≠

of country; I admit that I do not trust this considered patriotism that is based upon interest and that interest, by changing object, can destroy.

Nor do I attach a very great importance to the language of the Americans, when each day they express the intention of preserving the federal system that their fathers adopted.

What maintains a large number of citizens under the same government is much less the reasoned will to remain united than the instinctive and in a way involuntary accord that results from similarity of sentiments and resemblance of opinions.

I will never admit that men form a society by the sole fact that they acknowledge the same leader and obey the same laws; there is a society only when men consider a great number of objects in the same way; when they have the same opinions on a great number of subjects; when, finally, the same facts give rise among them to the same impressions and the same thoughts.[y]

Whoever, considering the question from this point of view, would study what is happening to the United States, would discover without difficulty that their inhabitants, divided as they are into twenty-four distinct sovereignties, constitute nonetheless a single people; and perhaps he would even come to think that the state of society more truly exists within the Anglo-American Union than among certain nations of Europe that have nevertheless only a single legislation and are subject to one man alone.[z]

y. "What truly constitutes a society is not having the same government, the same laws, the same language, it is having on a great number of points the same *ideas* and the same *opinions.* The first things are all material. They are the means by which ideas and opinions reign. Note well that for the despotic form itself (the one that has least need for a *society*) to be lasting, it must rely on this base" (YTC, CVh, 2, p.77).

z. Bond of American society./

Research what the ideas common to the Americans are. Ideas about the future. Faith in human perfectibility, faith in civilization that is judged favorably in every respect. Faith in liberty! This is universal.

Faith in the good sense and *definitive* reason of the people. This is general but not universal.

You can do on that a very interesting (illegible word).

The true bond of the Americans is this much more than love of country and nationality. These two things are more apparent than real, but the others differentiate

Although the Anglo-Americans have several religions, they all have the same way of envisaging religion.[a]

They do not always agree on the means to take in order to govern well and vary on some of the forms that are appropriate to give to the government, but they agree on the general principles that should govern human societies. From Maine to Florida, from the Missouri to the Atlantic Ocean, they believe that the origin of all legitimate powers is in the people. They conceive the same ideas on liberty and on equality; they profess the same opinions on the press, the right of association, the jury, the responsibility of the agents of power.

If we pass from political and religious ideas to the philosophical and moral opinions that regulate the daily actions of life and guide conduct as a whole, we will note the same agreement.

the Americans from all other peoples. What makes their common bond is what separates them from the others.

[To the side: Many men in France believe that American society is lacking [a (ed.)] bond. False idea. It has more of a true bond than ours.]

Shared ideas. *Philosophical and general ideas.*

That interest well understood is sufficient to lead men to do good.

That each man has the ability to govern himself.

That good is relative and that there it [makes (ed.)] continual progress in society; that nothing there is or should be finished forever.

More special ideas, advantages of equality (YTC. CVh, 2, p. 78).

This note already contains the seeds of many ideas of the first part of the third volume.

a. Tocqueville had copied into one of his travel notebooks the following fragment, an extract from a letter that he had written 8 July 1831 to Louis de Kergorlay:

> It is clear that there still remains here a greater core of the Christian religion than in any country in the world, to my knowledge, and I do not doubt that this disposition of minds still influences the political regime. It gives a moral and well-ordered turn to ideas; it stops the lapses of the spirit of innovation; above all it makes very rare the disposition of the soul, so common among us, that makes you rush forward against all obstacles *per fas et nefas* [by all possible paths] toward the goal that you have chosen. It is certain that a party, whatever desire it had to gain a result, would still believe itself obliged to march toward it only by means that would have an appearance of morality and would not openly shock religious beliefs, always more or less moral even when they are false (alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa, and *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 231; this fragment is not published in *Voyage, OC,* V, 1).

The Anglo-Americans[60] place moral authority in universal reason, as they do political power in the universality of citizens, and they consider that you must rely on the sense of all in order to discern what is permitted or forbidden, what is true or false. Most of them think that knowledge of his interest well understood is sufficient to lead a man toward the just and the honest. They believe that each person by birth has received the ability to govern himself, and that no one has the right to force his fellow to be happy. All have an intense faith in human perfectibility; they judge that the diffusion of knowledge must necessarily produce useful results, ignorance must lead to harmful effects; all consider society as a body in progress; humanity as a changing scene, where nothing is or should be fixed forever, and they admit that what seems good to them today can be replaced tomorrow by something better that is still hidden.[b]

I do not say that all these opinions are correct, but they are American.

At the same time that the Anglo-Americans are thus united with each other by these shared ideas, they are separated from all other peoples by a sentiment, pride.

For fifty years it has not ceased to be repeated to the inhabitants of the United States that they form the only religious, enlightened and free people. They see that among them until now democratic institutions have pros-

60. *I think I do not need to say that by this expression:* the Anglo-Americans, *I mean only to speak about the great majority of them. A few isolated individuals always stand outside of this majority.*

b. At the same time that the Americans are thus united with each other by opinions, what separates them from others, *pride.*

They are separated from all other peoples.

Religion, by a sentiment of pride.

Politics, they believe [themselves (ed.)] alone democratic.

Philosophy, are in a state to be free.

Economy, (illegible word) are wise.

If we pass from political and religious ideas to philosophical opinions, properly speaking, to those that regulate the daily actions of life and direct conduct as a whole, I will note the same agreement.

Most Americans accept that the knowledge of interest well understood is sufficient to lead men to honesty (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 103).

pered, while they fail in the rest of the world; so they have an immense opinion of themselves, and they are not far from believing that they form a species apart in the human race.

Thus the dangers that menace the American Union do not arise from diversity of opinions any more than from that of interests. They must be sought in the variety of characters and in the passions of the Americans.

The men who inhabit the immense territory of the United States have nearly all come from a shared stock; but over time climate and above all slavery have introduced marked differences between the character of the English of the South and the character of the English of the North.

It is generally believed among us that slavery gives to one portion of the Union interests contrary to those of the others. I have not noted that this was the case. Slavery has not created interests in the South contrary to those of the North; but it has modified the character of the inhabitants of the South, and has given them different habits.

I have shown elsewhere what influence servitude had exercised on the commercial capacity of the Americans of the South; this same influence extends equally to their mores.

The slave is a servant who does not argue and who submits to everything without a murmur. Sometimes he murders his master, but he never resists him. In the South there are no families so poor that they do not have slaves. The American of the South from his birth finds himself invested with a kind of domestic dictatorship; the first notions that he receives of life make him know that he is born to command, and the first habit that he contracts is that of dominating without difficulty. So education tends powerfully to make the American of the South a man haughty, quick, irascible, violent, ardent in his desires, impatient with obstacles; but easy to discourage if he cannot triumph with the first blow.

The American of the North does not see slaves rush up around his cradle. He does not even find free servants, for most often he is limited to providing for his needs by himself. Soon after he is born, his mind is presented with the idea of necessity from all directions. So he learns early to know on his own the exact natural limit of his power; he does not expect to bend by force wills that are opposed to his, and he knows that to gain the support

of his fellows it is above all necessary to win their favor. So he is patient, thoughtful, tolerant,[c] slow to act, and persevering in his designs.

In the southern states the most pressing needs of man are always satisfied. Thus the American of the South is not preoccupied by the material needs of life; someone else takes care of thinking about them for him. Free on this point, his imagination is directed toward other greater and less precisely defined matters. [<So the whites in the south form an aristocratic body {kind of aristocracy}. Consequently a certain feudal tendency reigns in their thoughts and in their tastes.>] The American of the South loves grandeur, luxury, glory, fame, pleasures, idleness above all; nothing forces him to make efforts in order to live, and as he has no necessary work, he falls asleep and does not undertake even useful work.

Because equality of fortunes reigns in the North, and slavery no longer exists there, man there is absorbed, as it were, by these very material concerns that the white scorns in the South. From his birth he is busy fighting poverty, and he learns to place material comfort above all the enjoyments of the mind and heart. His imagination, concentrated on the small details of life, fades, his ideas are fewer and less general, but they become more practical, clearer and more precise. Since he directs all the efforts of his intelligence only toward the study of well-being, he does not take long to excel there; he knows admirably how to make the most of nature and of men in order to produce wealth; he understands marvelously the art of making society work toward the prosperity of each one of its members, and of extracting from individual egoism the happiness of all.

The man of the North has not only experience, but also learning; but he does not prize knowledge as a pleasure. He values it as a means, and he avidly takes hold only of its useful applications.

The American [{man}] of the South is more spontaneous, more witty, more open, more generous, more intellectual and more brilliant.

The American [{man}] of the North is more active, more reasonable, more enlightened and more skillful.

c. In the margin: "≠ *Tolerant* indicates a virtue. A word would be needed that indicates the interested and necessary toleration of a man who needs others.≠"

The one has the tastes, prejudices, weaknesses and the grandeur of all aristocracies.

The other, the qualities and failings that characterize the middle class.

Bring two men together in society, give to these two men the same interests and in part the same opinions; if their character, their enlightenment and their civilization differ, there is a great chance that they will not get along. The same remark is applicable to a society of nations.[*]

So slavery does not attack the American confederation directly by interests, but indirectly by mores.

The states that joined the federal pact in 1790 numbered thirteen; the confederation counts twenty-four of them today. The population that amounted to nearly four million in 1790 had quadrupled in the space of forty years; in 1830 it rose to nearly thirteen million.[61]

Such changes cannot take place without danger.

For a society of nations as for a society of individuals, there are three principal ways to last: the wisdom of the members, their individual weakness, and their small number.

The Americans who withdraw from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean in order to plunge into the West are adventurers impatient with any kind of yoke, greedy for wealth, often cast out by the states where they were born. They arrive in the middle of the wilderness without knowing each other. There they find to control them neither traditions nor family support, nor examples. Among them the rule of laws is weak, and that of mores is weaker still. So the men who daily populate the valleys of the Mississippi are inferior in all ways to the Americans who inhabit the old limits of the Union. They already exercise, however, a great influence in its councils, and they

[*]. It is to this diversity of characters that you must resort in order to explain how every time there is a division of opinion among the Anglo-Americans, you have seen the North on one side and the South on the other, often without being able to see the same division found in their interests. {See from the time of Washington the question of the tax on distilled liquors. Marshall, vol. 5, p. 185.}

61. *Census of 1790* *3,929,328*
Census of 1830 *12,856,165.*

arrive at the government of common affairs before having learned to manage themselves.[62]

The weaker the members are individually, the greater the society's chances to last, for they then have security only by remaining united. When, in 1790, the most populated of the American republics did not have 500,000 inhabitants,[63] each one of them felt its insignificance as an independent people, and this thought made obedience to a federal authority easier. But when one of the confederated states numbers 2,000,000 inhabitants, as does the state of New York, and covers a territory whose area is equal to one-quarter of that of France,[64] it feels strong by itself, and if it continues to desire the union as useful to its well-being, it no longer regards it as necessary to its existence; it can do without it; and agreeing to remain there, it does not take long to want to be preponderant in it.

The mere multiplication of members of the Union would already tend powerfully to break the federal bond. All men placed at the same point of view do not look at the same objects in the same way. This is so with all the more reason when the point of view is different. So as the number of American republics increases, you see the chance to gather the assent of all to the same laws diminish.

Today the interests of the different parts of the Union are not in conflict with each other; but who could foresee the various changes that the near future will bring about in a country where each day creates cities and every five years nations?

Since the founding of the English colonies the number of inhabitants doubles every twenty-two years or so; I do not see any causes that should for the next century stop this progressive movement of the Anglo-American population. Before one hundred years have passed I think that the territory

62. *This, it is true, is only a temporary peril. I do not doubt that with time society will become settled and orderly in the west, as it has already become on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.*

63. *Pennsylvania had 431,373 inhabitants in 1790.*

64. *Area of the state of New York, 6,213 square leagues (46,500 square miles). See* View of the United States, *by Darby, p. 435.*

occupied or claimed by the United States will be covered by more than one hundred million inhabitants and divided into forty states.[65]

I admit that these one hundred million men do not have different interests; I grant them all, on the contrary, an equal advantage in remaining united, and I say that, by the very fact that they are one hundred million, forming forty distinct and unequally powerful nations, the maintenance of the federal government is nothing more than a happy accident.

I would like to believe in human perfectibility; but until men have changed in nature and are completely transformed, I will refuse to believe in the duration of a government whose task is to hold together forty diverse peoples spread over a surface equal to half of Europe,[66] to avoid rivalries, ambition, and struggles among them, and to bring the action of their independent wills together toward the accomplishment of the same projects.

But the greatest risk that the Union runs by growing comes from the continual displacement of forces that takes place within it.

From the shores of Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico, you count as the crow flies about four hundred French leagues. Along this immense line winds the frontier of the United States; sometimes it stays within these limits, most often it penetrates well beyond into the wilderness. It has been calculated that along this entire vast front whites advanced each year on average seven leagues.[67] From time to time an obstacle presents itself: it is an unproductive district, a lake, an Indian nation that is met unexpectedly

65. *If the population continues to double in twenty-two years, for another century, as it has done for two hundred years, in 1852 you will number in the United States twenty-four million inhabitants, forty-eight in 1874, and ninety-six in 1896. It will be so even if you encountered on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains terrain that was unsuitable for agriculture. The lands already occupied can very easily hold this number of inhabitants. One hundred million men spread over the soil occupied at this moment by the twenty-four states and the three territories that compose the Union would only give 762 individuals per square league, which would still be very far from the average population of France, which is 1,006; from that of England, which is 1,457; and which would remain even below the population of Switzerland. Switzerland, despite its lakes and mountains, numbers 783 inhabitants per square league. See Malte-Brun, vol. VI, p. 92.*

66. *The territory of the United States has an area of 295,000 square leagues; that of Europe, according to Malte-Brun, vol. VI, p. 4, is 500,000.*

67. *See* Legislative Documents, *20th Congress, n. 117, p. 105.*

in its path. The column then stops an instant; its two extremities bend toward each other and, after they have rejoined, the advance begins again. There is in this gradual and continuous march of the European race towards the Rocky Mountains something providential; it is like a flood of men that rises unceasingly and that swells each day by the hand of God.

Within this first line of conquerors cities are built and vast states are founded. In 1790, scarcely a few thousand pioneers were found spread across the valleys of the Mississippi; today these same valleys hold as many men as the entire nation contained in 1790. The population there reaches nearly four million inhabitants.[68] The city of Washington was founded in 1800, at the very center of the American confederation; now this city finds itself at one of its extremities. The representatives of the last states of the West,[69] in order to take their seats in Congress, are already obliged to make a journey as long as that of the traveler who goes from Vienna to Paris.

All the states of the Union are carried along at the same time towards wealth; but all cannot grow and prosper in the same proportion.

In the north of the Union detached branches of the Allegheny Mountain chain, advancing to the Atlantic Ocean, form spacious harbors and ports always open to the largest ships. From the Potomac, in contrast, and following the coast of America to the mouth of the Mississippi, you find nothing more than a flat and sandy terrain. In this part of the Union the mouths of nearly all the rivers are obstructed, and the ports that are open here and there in the middle of lagoons do not present to ships the same depth and offer to commerce much smaller facilities than those of the North.

To this first inferiority which arises from nature another is joined that comes from laws.

We have seen that slavery, which is abolished in the North, still exists in the South, and I have shown the fatal influence that it exercises on the well-being of the master himself.

68. *3,672,317, census of 1830.*

69. *From Jefferson, capital of the state of Missouri, to Washington, you count 1,019 miles, or 420 postal leagues (*American Almanac, *1831, p. 43 [44 (ed.)]).*

So the North must be more commercial[70] and more industrious than the South. It is natural that population and wealth concentrate there more rapidly.

The states situated on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean are already half populated. Most of the lands have an owner; so those states cannot receive the same number of emigrants as the states of the West that still offer an unlimited field to industry. The basin of the Mississippi is infinitely more fertile than the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. This reason added to all the others vigorously pushes the Europeans toward the West. This is rigorously demonstrated by figures.

If you work with the whole of the United States, you find that in forty years the number of inhabitants there has more or less tripled. But if you envisage only the basin of the Mississippi, you discover that in the same period of time the population[71] there has become thirty-one times greater.[72]

Each day the center of federal power is displaced. Forty years ago the

70. *In order to judge the difference that exists between the commercial movement of the South and that of the North, it is enough to glance at the following picture:*

In 1829, the ships of large and small commerce belonging to Virginia, the two Carolinas and Georgia (the four large states of the South) had a tonnage of only 5,243.

*In the same year, the vessels of the state of Massachusetts alone had a tonnage of 17,322 (*Legislative Documents, *21st Congress, 2nd session, n. 140, p. 244).*

Thus the state of Massachusetts alone had three times more ships than the above-named four states.

*The state of Massachusetts, however, has only 959 square leagues of area (7,335 square miles) and 610,014 inhabitants, while the four states that I am speaking about have 27,204 square leagues (210,000 miles) and 3,047,767 inhabitants. Thus the area of the state of Massachusetts forms only one thirtieth of the area of the four states, and its population is five times smaller than theirs (*View of the United States, *by Darby). Slavery harms in several ways the commercial prosperity of the South: it diminishes the spirit of enterprise among whites, and it prevents them from finding at their disposal the sailors that they need. The navy recruits in general only from the lowest class of the population. Now it is slaves who in the South form this class, and it is difficult to use them at sea; their service would be inferior to that of whites, and you would always have to be afraid that they might revolt in the middle of the ocean, or might take flight when reaching foreign shores.*

71. View of the United States, *by Darby, p. 444.*

72. *Note that, when I speak about the basin of the Mississippi, I am not including the portion of the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia, placed west of the Allegheny Mountains, and that should, however, be considered as also part of it.*

majority of the citizens of the Union were on the shores of the sea in the vicinity of the place where Washington is rising today; now it is deeper into the land and more to the North; you can be sure that within twenty years it will be on the other side of the Allegheny Mountains. Assuming that the Union continues to exist, the basin of the Mississippi, because of its fertility and its extent, is necessarily called to become the permanent center of federal power. In thirty or forty years the basin of the Mississippi will have taken its natural rank. It is easy to calculate that then its population, compared to that of the states placed on the shores of the Atlantic, will be in proportion of about 40 to 11. So in a few more years the leadership of the Union will escape completely from the states that formed it, and the population of the valleys of the Mississippi will predominate in federal councils.

This continuous gravitation of strength and federal influence toward the Northwest is revealed every ten years, when, after doing a federal census of the population, the number of representatives that each state must send to Congress is fixed once again.[73]

In 1790, Virginia had nineteen representatives in Congress. This number continued to grow until 1813, when we saw it attain the figure of twenty-three. From this time it began to decrease. In 1833 it was no more than twenty-one.[74] During this same period the state of New York followed an

73. *You notice then that during the ten years that have just passed one state increased its population in the proportion of 5 to 100, as Delaware; another was in the proportion of 250 to 100, as the territory of Michigan. Virginia finds that, during the same period, it increased the number of its population in the relationship of 13 to 100, while the adjacent state of Ohio increased the number of its population in the proportion of 61 to 100. See the general table contained in the* National Calendar;[d] *you will be struck by the inequality in the fortune of the different states.*

d. It concerns the *American Almanac for 1832,* p. 162. The *National Calendar* also contains figures on the census, but the percentages given by Tocqueville belong to the *American Almanac.*

74. *You are going to see further along that during the last period the population of Virginia grew in the proportion of 13 to 100. It is necessary to explain how the number of the representatives of a state can decrease when the population of the state, far from decreasing itself, is advancing. I take as point of comparison Virginia, which I have already cited. The number of representatives of Virginia, in 1823, was in proportion to the total number of representatives of the Union; the number of representatives of Virginia in 1833 is equally in proportion to the total number of representatives of the Union in 1833, and in proportion in relation to its population, which increased during these ten years. So the relation of the new number of*

opposite progression: in 1790, it had in Congress ten representatives; in 1813, twenty-seven; in 1823, thirty-four; in 1833, forty. Ohio did not have a single representative in 1803; in 1833 it had nineteen.

It is difficult to conceive of a lasting union between two peoples one of whom is poor and weak, the other rich and strong, even if it would be proved that the strength and wealth of one is not the cause of the weakness and poverty of the other. Union is still more difficult to maintain in a time when one is losing strength and when the other is in the process of gaining it.

This rapid and disproportionate increase of certain states threatens the independence of the others. If New York, with its two million inhabitants and its forty representatives, wanted to pass a law in Congress, it would perhaps succeed. But even if the most powerful states did not seek to oppress the least powerful, the danger would still exist, for it is in the possibility of the deed almost as much as in the deed itself.

The weak rarely have confidence in the justice and reason of the strong. So the states that are growing less quickly than the others cast a look of distrust and envy on those that fortune favors. From that comes this profound malaise and this vague uneasiness that you notice in one part of the Union, and that contrast with the well-being and confidence that reign in the other. I think that the hostile attitude taken by the South has no other causes.

The men of the South are of all Americans those who should most hold on to the Union, for they are the ones who above all would suffer from being abandoned to themselves; but they are the only ones who threaten to break the bond of the confederation. What causes that? It is easy to say: the South, which provided four Presidents to the confederation;[75] which knows today that federal power is escaping from it; which each year sees

representatives from Virginia to the old will be proportional, on the one hand, in relation to the new total number of representatives to the old, and, on the other, in relation to the proportions of increase for Virginia and for the entire Union. Thus in order for the number of representatives from Virginia to remain stationary, it is sufficient that the relation of the proportion of increase of the small country to that of the large be the inverse of the relation of the new total number of representatives to the old; if this proportion of increase of the Virginia population is in a weaker relation to the proportion of increase of the entire Union, as the new number of representatives of the Union with the old, the number of representatives of Virginia will be decreased.

75. *Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe.*

the number of its representatives to Congress decrease and those of the North and of the West increase; the South, populated by ardent and irascible men, is getting angry and is becoming uneasy. It looks at itself with distress; examining the past, it wonders each day if it is not oppressed. If it comes to find that a law of the Union is not clearly favorable to it, it cries out that it is being abused by force; it complains ardently, and if its voice is not heard, it becomes indignant and threatens to withdraw from a society whose costs it bears, without getting any profits.

"The tariff laws," said the inhabitants of Carolina in 1832, "enrich the North and ruin the South, for, otherwise, how could you imagine that the North, with its inhospitable climate and arid soil, would constantly increase its wealth and power, while the South, which is the garden of America, is falling rapidly into decline?"[76]

If the changes that I have talked about took place gradually, so that each generation at least had the time to pass by along with the order of things that it had witnessed, the danger would be less; but there is something precipitous, I could almost say revolutionary, in the progress that society makes in America. The same citizen has been able to see his state march at the head of the Union and then become powerless in federal councils. There is one such Anglo-American republic that grew up as quickly as a man, and that was born, grew and reached maturity in thirty years.

It must not be imagined, however, that the states that lose power are becoming depopulated or are declining; their prosperity is not stopping; they are growing even more quickly than any kingdom of Europe.[77] But it

76. *See the report made by its committee to the Convention that proclaimed nullification in South Carolina.*

77. *The population of a country assuredly forms the first element of its wealth. During this same period of 1820 to 1832, when Virginia lost two representatives to Congress, its population increased in the proportion of 13.7 to 100;*[e] *that of the Carolinas in the relation of 15 to 100, and that of Georgia in the proportion of 51.5 to 100. (See* American Almanac, *1832, p. 162.) Now Russia, which is the European country where the population grows most quickly, only increases in ten years the number of its inhabitants in the proportion of 9.5 to 100; France in that of 7 to 100, and Europe as a whole in that of 4.7 to 100 (see Malte-Brun, vol. VI, p. 95).*

e. Draft of the note in the manuscript: "The population grew by 145,000 inhabitants or 13.7 percent in ten years. See fifth census. It seems to me that by following this progression the population of Virginia would take about 75 years to double."

seems to them that they are becoming poor because they are not becoming rich as quickly as their neighbor, and they believe they are losing their power because they suddenly come in contact with a power greater than theirs.[78] So it is their sentiments and their passions that are wounded more than their interests. But isn't this enough for the confederation to be at risk? If since the beginning of the world peoples and kings had in view only their true utility, you would hardly know what war was among men.

Thus the greatest danger that threatens the United States arises from their very prosperity; it tends to create among several of the confederated states the intoxication that accompanies the rapid augmentation of wealth, and, among others, the envy, distrust and the regrets that most often follow its loss.

The Americans rejoice when contemplating this extraordinary movement; they should, it seems to me, consider it with regret and with fear. Whatever they do, the Americans of the United States will become one of the greatest peoples of the world; they will cover nearly all of North America with their offspring; the continent that they inhabit is their domain, it cannot escape them. So what presses them to take possession of it today? Wealth, power and glory cannot fail to be theirs, and they rush toward this immense fortune as if only a moment remained for them to grasp it.

I believe I have demonstrated that the existence of the present confederation depends entirely on the agreement of all the confederated states to want to remain united; and from this given I tried to find out what the causes are that could lead the different states to want to separate. But there are two ways for the Union to perish. One of the confederated states can want to withdraw from the contract and thus break the common bond violently; most of the remarks that I have made before apply to this case. The federal government can progressively lose its power by a simultaneous tendency of the united republics to take back the use of their independence. The central power, deprived successively of all of its prerogatives, reduced

78. *It must be admitted, however, that the depreciation that has taken place in the value of tobacco for fifty years has notably diminished the comfort of the farmers of the South; but this fact is independent of the will of the men of the North as it is of theirs.*

by a tacit agreement to powerlessness, would become incapable of fulfilling its object, and the second Union would perish like the first, by a sort of senile weakness.

The gradual weakening of the federal bond, which leads finally to the annulment of the Union, is moreover in itself a distinct fact that can lead to many other less extreme results before producing that final result. The confederation would still exist, though the weakness of its government could already have reduced the nation to powerlessness, and caused internal anarchy and the slowing of the general prosperity of the country.

So after trying to find out what is leading[f] the Anglo-Americans to become disunited, it is important to examine whether, given the Union's continued existence, their government is enlarging the sphere of its action or is narrowing it, whether it is becoming more energetic or weaker.

The Americans are clearly preoccupied by a great fear. They notice that among most peoples of the world the exercise of the rights of sovereignty tend to become concentrated in a few hands, and they are afraid of the idea that it will end up by being so among them. The statesmen themselves experience these terrors, or at least pretend to experience them; for in America centralization is not popular, and you cannot more skillfully court the majority than by rising against the alleged encroachments of the central power. The Americans refuse to see that in countries where this centralizing tendency that frightens them manifests itself, you find only a single people, while the Union is a confederation of different peoples; a fact that is sufficient to disrupt all of the expectations based on the analogy.

I admit that I consider these fears of a great number[g] of Americans as entirely imaginary. Far from fearing like them the consolidation of sovereignty in the hands of the Union, I believe that the federal government is becoming weaker in a visible way.

To prove what I am advancing on this point I will not resort to old

f. In the manuscript: "what could lead . . ."
g. The manuscript says: "of some Americans."

facts, but to those that I was able to witness or that have taken place in our time.[h]

When you examine attentively what is happening in the United States, you discover without difficulty the existence of two contrary tendencies; they are like two currents that travel over the same bed in opposite directions.

During the forty-five years that the Union has existed time has dealt with a host of provincial prejudices that at first militated against it. The patriotic sentiment that attached each of the Americans to his state has become less exclusive. By getting to know each other better the various parts of the Union have drawn closer. The mail, that great link between minds, today penetrates into the heart of the wilderness;[79] steamboats make all points of the coast communicate with each other daily. Commerce descends and goes back up the rivers of the interior with an unparalleled rapidity.[80] To these opportunities created by nature and art are joined instability of desires, restlessness of spirit, and love of riches that, constantly pushing the American out of his house, put him in communication with a great number of his fellow citizens. He travels his country in all directions; he visits all the populations that inhabit it. You do not find a province of France whose inhabitants know each other as perfectly as the 13 million men who cover the surface of the United States.

h. In the margin: "≠So the existence of the Union [v: the will to remain united], a matter of chance. Its *dismemberment,* something always possible, something inevitable with time.

"The weakening of the federal government as government apart from *dismemberment,* another question.≠" The first intention of Tocqueville had been to acknowledge in the introduction of the second volume his error as to the danger of the dissolution of the United States (see note b for p. 690 of the third volume and James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* pp. 102–11.

79. *In 1832, the district of Michigan, which has only 31,639 inhabitants and still forms only a wilderness scarcely cleared, showed the development of 940 miles of post roads. The nearly entirely wild territory of Arkansas was already crossed by 1,938 miles of post roads. See* The Report of the Postmaster General, *30 November 1833. Carrying newspapers alone throughout the Union brings in 254,796 dollars per year. [These documents are found in* National Calendar, *1833, p. 244. See "Report of the Postmaster General,"* National Intelligencer, *12 December 1833.]*

80. *In the course of ten years, from 1821 to 1831, 271 steamboats were launched just on the rivers that water the valley of the Mississippi [*National Almanac, *1832, p. 255]. In 1829, there were 256 steamboats in the United States. See* Legislative Documents, *n. 140, p. 274.*

At the same time that the Americans mingle, they assimilate; the differences that climate, origin and institutions have placed between them diminish. They all get closer and closer to a common type. Each year thousands of men who have left the North spread throughout all parts of the Union: they bring with them their beliefs, their opinions, their mores, and as their enlightenment is superior to that of the men among whom they are going to live, they do not take long to take hold of affairs and to modify society to their profit. This continual emigration of the North toward the South singularly favors the fusion of all the provincial characters into one single national character.[j] So the civilization of the North seems destined to become the common measure against which all the rest must model themselves one day.[k]

As the industry of the Americans makes progress, you see the commercial bonds that unite all the confederated states tighten, and the union moves from opinions into habits. The passage of time finally makes a host of fantastic terrors that tormented the imagination of the men of 1789 disappear. The federal power has not become oppressive; it has not destroyed the independence of the states; it does not lead the confederated states to monarchy; with the Union the small states have not fallen into dependence on the large. The confederation has continued to grow constantly in population, in wealth, in power.

So I am persuaded that in our times the Americans have fewer natural difficulties living united than they found in 1789; the Union has fewer enemies than then.[m]

j. Beaumont had written during his journey: "American uniformity./

"One of the principal causes of the uniformity of mores among the Americans, which is always going to increase, comes from the spirit of emigration of the inhabitants of New England, who bring everywhere their enterprising, industrious and mercantile spirit. (Baltimore, 31 October 1831)" (YTC, CIX).

k. At the time of his conversation with Tocqueville and Beaumont, John Latrobe, a lawyer from Baltimore, had insisted a great deal on the differences between the south and the north of the United States and had not hesitated to assert: "I believe that all the American continent must model itself one day on New England" (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 111).

m. "All superior men for the Union, all secondary men against" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 50).

And yet, if you want to study carefully the history of the United States over forty-five years, you will easily be persuaded that the federal power is declining.

It is not difficult to point out the causes of this phenomenon.

At the moment when the Constitution of 1789 was promulgated, everything was perishing in anarchy; the Union that followed this disorder excited much fear and hatred; but it had ardent friends because it was the expression of a great need. So although more attacked then than it is today, the federal power rapidly reached its maximum power, as usually happens to a government that triumphs after inflaming its forces in the struggle. In this period the interpretation of the Constitution seemed to expand rather than narrow federal sovereignty, and the Union presented in several respects the spectacle of one and the same people led, within as without, by a single government.[n]

But in order to reach this point the people in a way surpassed itself.

The Constitution had not destroyed the individuality of the states, and all bodies, whatever they may be, have a secret instinct that carries them toward independence. This instinct is still more pronounced in a country like America, where each village forms a kind of republic accustomed to governing itself.

So there was an effort made by the states that submitted to federal preponderance. And every effort, even if crowned with a great success, cannot fail to weaken with the cause that gave it birth.

As the federal government consolidated its power, America resumed its rank among nations, peace reappeared on its borders, public credit recovered; confusion was succeeded by a settled and [well-regulated] order that allowed individual industry to follow its natural path and develop in liberty.

This very prosperity began to make the Americans lose sight of the cause

n. In the margin: "≠It was the temporary effect of the will of the sovereigns, and not the permanent effect of the fusion of all sovereignty into a single one. If that had been the case, the power of the Union instead of diminishing would have increased constantly.≠"

that had produced it; the danger having passed, they no longer found in themselves the energy and patriotism that had helped to avert it. Delivered from the fears that preoccupied them, they lapsed easily into the course of their habits and abandoned themselves without resistance to the ordinary tendency of their inclinations. From the moment when a strong government no longer seemed necessary, some began again to think that it was a nuisance. Everything prospered with the Union, and no one separated from the Union; but they hardly wanted to feel the action of the power that represented it. In general they desired to remain united, and in each particular fact they tended to become independent again. The principle of confederation was each day more easily accepted and less applied; thus the federal government itself, by creating order and peace, brought about its decline.

As soon as this disposition of minds began to show itself outwardly, party men who live on the passions of the people began to exploit it to their profit.

From that moment the federal government found itself in a very critical situation; its enemies had popular favor, and by promising to weaken it, they gained the right to lead it.[o]

From that period onward every time the government of the Union entered into a contest with that of the states, it has almost never ceased to retreat. When there has been an occasion to interpret the terms of the federal Constitution, the interpretation has most often been against the Union and favorable to the states.

The Constitution gave the federal government the care of providing for the national interests. It had been thought that it was up to the federal government to do or to encourage in the interior the great undertakings (*internal improvements*) that were of a nature to increase the prosperity of the entire Union, such as, for example, canals.

The states became frightened by the idea of seeing an authority other than their own thus dispose of a portion of their territory. They feared that the central power, acquiring a formidable patronage in this way within their

o. In the margin: "≠I believe, but it is to be verified, that the entry of the republicans {federalists} to power was the first step, step indirect but real along this path.≠"

own area, would come to exercise an influence there that they wanted to reserve entirely to their agents alone.[p]

The democratic party that was always opposed to all developments of the federal power then raised its voice; Congress was accused of usurpation; the head of State, of ambition. The central government intimidated by this uproar ended by recognizing its error itself, and by withdrawing strictly into the sphere that was drawn for it.

The Constitution gives the Union the privilege of dealing with foreign peoples. The Union had in general considered the Indian tribes that border the frontiers of its territory from this point of view. As long as these savages agreed to flee before civilization, the federal right was not contested; but from the day when an Indian tribe undertook to settle on a piece of land, the surrounding states claimed a right of possession over these lands and a right of sovereignty over the men within them. The central government hastened to recognize both, and after dealing with the Indians as with independent peoples, it delivered them as subjects to the legislative tyranny of the states.[81]

Among the states that were formed along the Atlantic shore, several extended indefinitely to the West into the wilderness where Europeans had not yet penetrated. Those whose limits were irrevocably fixed jealously saw the immense future open to their neighbors. The former, in a spirit of conciliation and in order to facilitate the act of Union, agreed to draw limits for themselves and abandoned to the confederation all the territory that could be found beyond those limits.[82]

Since this period the federal government has become the proprietor of

p. In the margin: "≠Examine here the succession of messages of the various Presidents who have followed each other for forty years. But wait to see if I cannot find an agent for this research.≠" See note a for p. 84.

81. *See in the Legislative Documents that I have already cited in the chapter on the Indians the letter of the President of the United States to the Cherokees, his correspondence on this subject with his agents, and his messages to Congress.*

82. *The first act of cession took place on the part of the state of New York in 1780; Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, South Carolina, North Carolina followed this example at different periods. Georgia was the last; its act of cession dates only from 1802.*

all the unsettled land[TN 6] found outside of the thirteen states originally confederated. It is the federal government that undertakes to divide and to sell that land, and the money that is brought in is put exclusively into the treasury of the Union. With the aid of this revenue the federal government buys the Indians' lands from them, opens roads in new districts, and facilitates with all its power the rapid development of society there.

Now, it has happened that in these very wilderness areas, formerly ceded by the inhabitants on the shores of the Atlantic, new states have formed over time. Congress has continued to sell, to the profit of the entire nation, the unsettled lands that these states still enclose within them. But today those states claim that once constituted they should have the exclusive right to apply the proceeds of these sales to their own use. Since complaints had become more and more threatening, Congress believed it necessary to take away from the Union a part of the privileges that it had enjoyed until then, and at the end of 1832, it passed a law that, without ceding to the new republics of the West the ownership of their unsettled lands, nonetheless applied the greatest part of the revenue that was drawn from it to their profit alone.[83]

It is sufficient to travel across the United States to appreciate the advantages that the country derives from the bank.[r] These advantages are of several kinds; but there is one above all that strikes the foreigner; the notes of

Translator's Note 6: American historians usually refer to the matter Tocqueville is discussing here as the controversy over public lands. Given the context, to translate *terrain inculte* or *terres incultes* as *uncultivated land(s)* would miss the point; I have therefore used the term *unsettled land(s),* that is, public land not yet settled.

83. *The President refused, it is true, to assent to this law, but he completely accepted its principle. See* Message *of 8 December 1833.*[q]

q. A note in another place of the chapter points out: "On all that see the language of the President in 1833, *National Calendar,* p. 27."

r. The discussion on the Bank of the United States and the question of the tariff formed in the beginning two distinct sections under the titles: AFFAIR OF THE BANK OF THE UNITED STATES and NULLIFICATION AFFAIR. The first section began in this place with this sentence: "The attacks directed at this moment against the Bank of the United States can be considered as new proofs of the weakening of the federal principle." The details cited by Tocqueville could he been found in the congressional debates published in the *National Intelligencer* at the end of 1833 and in the first months of 1834.

the Bank of the United States are accepted at the same value on the wilderness frontier as in Philadelphia, the seat of its operations.[84]

The Bank of the United States, however, is the object of great hatred. Its directors have declared themselves against the President, and they are accused not improbably of having abused their influence in order to hinder his election. So the President, with all the fervor of a personal enmity, attacks the institution that the former represent. What has encouraged the President to pursue his vengeance in this way is that he feels supported by the secret instincts of the majority.

The Bank forms the great monetary link of the Union as the Congress is its great legislative link, and the same passions that tend to make the states independent of the central power tend toward the destruction of the Bank.

The Bank of the United States always holds in its hands a great number of the notes belonging to the provincial banks; every day it can oblige the latter to redeem their notes in specie. For the Bank, in contrast, such a danger is not to be feared; the greatness of its available resources allows it to meet all expenses. Their existence thus threatened, the provincial banks are forced to exercise restraint and to put into circulation only a number of notes proportionate to their capital. Only with impatience do the provincial banks endure this salutary control. So the newspapers that are their creatures and the President, made by his interest into their organ, attack the Bank with a kind of fury. Against it they stir up local passions and the blind democratic instinct of the country. According to them the directors of the Bank form an aristocratic and permanent body whose influence cannot fail to make itself felt in the government, and must sooner or later alter the principles of equality on which American society rests.

The struggle of the Bank against its enemies is only one incident in the great battle that the provinces wage in America against the central power;

84. *The current Bank of the United States was created in 1816, with a capital of 35,000,000 dollars (185,500,000 fr.); its charter expires in 1836. Last year Congress passed a law to renew it, but the President refused his assent. Today the struggle is engaged by both sides with an extreme violence, and it is easy to predict the coming fall of the Bank.*

the spirit of independence and democracy, against the spirit of hierarchy and subordination. I am not claiming that the enemies of the Bank of the United States are precisely the same individuals who on other points attack the federal government; but I am saying that the attacks against the Bank of the United States are the result of the same instincts that militate against the federal government, and that the large number of the enemies of the first is an unfortunate symptom of the weakening of the second.

But the Union[s] has never shown itself more feeble than in the famous tariff affair.[85]

The wars of the French Revolution and that of 1812, by preventing free communication between America and Europe, had created factories in the north of the Union. When peace had reopened the road to the New World to European products, the Americans believed they had to establish a system of tariffs that could at the very same time protect their emerging industry and pay off the amount of debts that the wars had made them contract.

The states of the South,[t] which have no manufacturing to encourage and which are only agricultural, did not take long to complain about this measure.

I am not claiming to examine here what could be imaginary or real in their complaints, I am telling the facts.

From 1820 onward, South Carolina declared in a petition to Congress that the tariff law was *unconstitutional, oppressive* and *unjust.* After that Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, the state of Alabama and that of Mississippi, made more or less energetic complaints along the same lines.

s. Here the section on the Bank of the United States ended and the one on nullification began, which finished with the words: "no use would be made of it" [p. 624].

85. *For details of this affair, see principally* Legislative Documents, *22nd Congress, 2nd session, n. 30.*

t. Some weeks before leaving America the author admitted to his brother, Édouard: "I have only a superficial idea of the *South* of the Union, but in order to know it as well as the North, it would be necessary to have stayed there six months" (letter of 20 January 1832, YTC, BIa2). Various complications, including a very severe winter, a shipwreck, and the illness of Tocqueville, considerably reduced the time that the two friends had decided to spend in the South. Their stay in New Orleans lasted scarcely two days.

Far from taking these murmurings into account, Congress, in the years 1824 and 1828, again raised the tariff duties and again sanctioned the principle.

Then was produced or rather was recalled in the South a celebrated doctrine that took the name of *nullification.*[u]

I have shown in its place that the purpose of the federal Constitution was not to establish a league, but to create a national government. The Americans of the United States, in all cases foreseen by their Constitution, form only one and the same people. On all those points the national will expresses itself, as among all constitutional peoples, with the aid of a majority. Once the majority has spoken, the duty of the minority is to submit.

Such is the legal doctrine, the only one that is in agreement with the text of the Constitution and the known intention of those who established it.

The *nullifiers* of the South claim on the contrary that the Americans, by uniting, did not intend to blend into one and the same people, but that they only wanted to form a league of independent peoples; it follows that each state, having preserved its complete sovereignty if not in action at least in principle, has the right to interpret the laws of Congress, and to suspend within its borders the execution of those that to it seem opposed to the Constitution or to justice.

The entire doctrine of nullification is found in summary in a sentence pronounced in 1833 before the Senate of the United States by Mr. Calhoun, avowed head of the nullifiers of the South:

"The Constitution is a compact, to which the states are parties in their sovereign capacity; and that, as in all other cases of compact between parties having no common umpire, each has a right to judge for itself [the extent of its reserved powers]."[v]

u. "Nullifiers. See art. of the Revue" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 43). Was it the *Revue des deux mondes?*

v. These ideas appear in the speech of 26 February 1833 (reply to Webster), reproduced in the *National Intelligencer* of 26 March 1833. Tocqueville had as well obtained first-hand information on this subject during his visit to Philadelphia in October 1831.

Tocqueville writes to his father on 7 October 1831:

> We are in a great hurry to arrive in this last city. A remarkable event is happening there at this moment; all the partisans of free trade have sent deputies who form what

It is clear that such a doctrine destroys the federal bond in principle and in fact brings back the anarchy from which the Constitution of 1789 had delivered the Americans.

When South Carolina saw that Congress showed itself deaf to its complaints, it threatened to apply to the federal tariff law the doctrine of the nullifiers. Congress persisted in its system; finally the storm broke.

In the course of 1832, the people of South Carolina[86] called a national [state] convention to decide on the extraordinary means that remained to be taken; and on November 24 of the same year this convention published, under the name of an ordinance, a law that nullified the federal tariff law, and forbade levying the duties that were set forth there, and forbade accepting appeals that could be made to the federal courts.[87] This ordinance was supposed to be put in force only in the following month of February,

the Americans call a *convention;* it is a great assembly that, outside of the powers of the State, discusses one of the questions most likely to agitate political passions in this country, raises all the constitutional questions, and under the pretext of drafting a petition to Congress, really plays the role of Congress. We are very curious to see how things go within this convention. We will see there one of the most extreme consequences of the dogma of the sovereignty of the people (YTC, BIa2).

In a note of 14 October of the same year, Tocqueville summarizes in this way his ideas on the convention: "Of all that I have seen in America, it is the convention that most struck me as the dangerous and impractical consequence among us of the sovereignty of the people" (alphabetic notebook B, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 238). Memories of the revolution were too intense for Tocqueville to be able to accept the arguments of Sparks and Gilpin who, in 1833, wrote to him to assure him that the resolution of the tariff problem had contributed more to strengthening than to weakening the Union (Jared Sparks to Tocqueville, 30 August 1833; H. D. Gilpin to Tocqueville, 24 September 1833, in YTC, CId). Tocqueville got the opposite argument from the very mouth of a former President of the United States, John Quincy Adams (non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 97). James T. Schleifer (*The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,*" pp. 110–111) notes the little attention given by critics to the interpretations of Sparks and Gilpin.

86. *That is to say a majority of the people; for the opposing party, called Union Party, always numbered a very strong and very active minority in its favor. Carolina can have about 47,000 voters; 30,000 were favorable to nullification, and 17,000 opposed.*

87. *This ordinance was preceded by a report of a committee charged with preparing the draft; this report contains the exposition and the purpose of the law. You read there, p. 34:*

and it was pointed out that if Congress modified the tariff before this time, South Carolina would agree not to follow up on its threats with other measures. Later, but in a vague and unspecified way, the desire to submit the question to an extraordinary assembly of all the confederated states was expressed.

While waiting, South Carolina armed its militia and prepared for war.

What did Congress do? Congress, which had not listened to its entreating subjects, lent its ear to their complaints as soon as it saw them with weapons in hand.[88] It passed a law[89] according to which the duties set in the tariff were to be progressively reduced over ten years, until they had reached the point of not exceeding the needs of the government. Thus Congress completely abandoned the tariff principle. For a duty that protected industry, Congress substituted a purely fiscal measure.[90] In order to hide its defeat, the government of the Union took recourse in an expedient that is much used by weak governments: while yielding on the facts, it showed itself inflexible on the principles. At the same time that Congress changed the tariff legislation, it passed another law by virtue of which the

When the rights reserved to the several States are deliberately invaded, it is their right and their duty to "interpose for the purpose of arresting the progress of the evil of usurpation, and to maintain, within their respective limits, the authorities and privileges belonging to them as independent sovereignties" [Virginia Resolutions of 1798. (ed.)]. *If the several States do not possess this right, it is in vain that they claim to be sovereign. [. . . (ed.) . . .] South Carolina claims to be a sovereign State. She recognizes no tribunal upon earth as above her authority. It is true, she has entered into a solemn compact of Union with other sovereign States, but she claims, and will exercise the right to determine the extent of her obligations under that compact, nor will she consent that any other power shall exercise the right of judgment for her. And when that compact is violated by her co-States, or by the Government which they have created, she asserts her unquestionable right "to judge of the infractions as well as of the mode and measure of redress"* [Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 (ed.)].

88. *What really decided Congress on this measure was a demonstration by the powerful state of Virginia, whose legislature offered to serve as arbiter between the Union and South Carolina. Until then, the latter had seemed entirely abandoned, even by the states that had protested with it.*

89. *Law of 2 March 1833.*

90. *This law was suggested by Mr. Clay and passed in four days in both houses of Congress by an immense majority.*

President was vested with an extraordinary power to overcome by force the resistance that then was no longer to be feared.

South Carolina did not even agree to leave to the Union these weak appearances of victory; the same national [state] convention that had nullified the tariff law, having assembled again, accepted the concession that had been offered to it; but at the same time it declared that it would only persist more forcefully in the doctrine of the nullifiers, and to prove it, it annulled the law that conferred extraordinary powers on the President, even though it was very certain that no use would be made of it.

Nearly all the actions that I have just spoken about took place during the Presidency of General Jackson. You cannot deny that in the tariff affair the latter upheld the rights of the Union with skill and vigor. I believe, however, that, among the number of dangers that the federal power runs today, you must include the very conduct of the one who represents it.

Some persons in Europe have formed an opinion concerning the influence that General Jackson can exercise in the affairs of his country that seems very extravagant to those who have seen things up close.

You have heard it said that General Jackson had won battles, that he was an energetic man, led by character and habit to the use of force, avid for power and a despot by taste. All that is perhaps true, but the consequences that have been drawn from these truths are great mistakes.

It has been imagined that General Jackson wanted to establish a dictatorship in the United States, that he was going to make the military spirit reign there, and extend the central power to the point of endangering provincial liberties. In America the time for such undertakings and the century of such men has not yet arrived. If General Jackson had wanted to dominate in this way, he would assuredly have lost his political position and compromised his life; so he has not been so imprudent as to attempt it.

Far from wanting to extend federal power, the current President represents, on the contrary, the party that wants to restrict this power to the clearest and most precise terms of the Constitution, and that does not accept any interpretation that can ever be favorable to the government of the Union; far from presenting himself as the champion of centralization, General Jackson is the agent of provincial jealousies; it is the *decentralizing*

passions (if I can express myself in this way) that brought him to sovereign power. He remains and prospers there by flattering these passions each day. General Jackson is the slave of the majority; he follows it in its will, in its desires, in its half-discovered instincts, or rather he divines it and runs to put himself at its head.

Each time that the government of the states struggles with that of the Union it is rare that the President is not the first to doubt his right; he is almost always ahead of the legislative power; when there is room for interpretation on the extent of federal power, he lines up in a way against himself; he belittles himself, he hides, he stands aside.[*] It is not that he is naturally weak or an enemy of the union; when the majority declared itself against the pretensions of the nullifiers of the South, you saw him put himself at its head, formulate with clarity and energy the doctrine that the majority professed and be the first to call for the use of force. General Jackson, to use a comparison borrowed from the vocabulary of American parties, seems to me *federal* by taste and *republican* by calculation.[w]

After thus demeaning himself before the majority in order to win its favor, General Jackson rises again; he then marches toward the objects that the majority itself pursues, or toward those that it does not see with jealousy, overturning every obstacle before him. Strong due to a support that his predecessors did not have, he tramples underfoot his personal enemies wherever he finds them, with an ease that no President has found; on his own responsibility he takes measures that none before him would ever have dared to take; it even happens that he treats the national representation with a sort of almost insulting disdain; he refuses to approve the laws passed by Congress, and often neglects to respond to this great body. He is like a favorite who sometimes treats his master rudely. So the power of General Jackson is constantly increasing; but that of the President is decreasing. In

[*]. See message of 1832, *in fine* [at the end]. *National Calendar,* p. 31.

w. The remarks on Jackson and the American Presidency earned Tocqueville severe criticisms from Thomas H. Benton (*Thirty Years' View; or, a History of the Working of the American Government for Thirty Years, from 1820 to 1850,* New York: Appleton and Company, 1854, I, pp. 111–14). For an introduction to the ideas of Tocqueville on the Presidency, see Hugh Brogan, "Tocqueville and the American Presidency," *Journal of American Studies* 15, no. 3 (1981): 357–75. See as well note f for p. 372.

his hands the federal government is strong; it will pass enervated to his successor.

Either I am strangely mistaken, or the federal government tends each day to become weaker; it is withdrawing successively from affairs, it is narrowing more and more the circle of its action. Naturally weak, it is abandoning even the appearance of strength. From another perspective I thought I saw in the United States that the sentiment of independence was becoming more and more intense in the states, the love of provincial government more and more pronounced.

The Union is desired; but reduced to a shadow. They want it strong in certain cases and weak in all the others; they pretend that in time of war it can gather in its hand the national forces and all the resources of the country, and that in time of peace it does not so to speak exist; as if this alternation between debility and vigor was natural.

I see nothing that can for now stop this general movement of minds; the causes that have given it birth do not cease to operate in the same direction. So it will continue, and it can be predicted that, unless some extraordinary circumstance arises, the government of the Union will grow weaker each day.

I believe however that we are still far from the time when the federal power, incapable of protecting its own existence and bringing peace to the country, will fade away in a sense by itself. The Union is in the mores, it is desired; its results are clear, its benefits visible. When it is noticed that the weakness of the federal government compromises the existence of the Union, I do not doubt that we will see the birth of a movement of reaction in favor of strength.

The government of the United States is, of all the federal governments that have been established until now, the one that is most naturally destined to act; as long as you do not attack it in an indirect manner by the interpretation of its laws, as long as you do not profoundly alter its substance, a change of opinion, an internal crisis, a war, could suddenly restore the vigor that it needs.

What I wanted to note is only this: many men among us think that in the United States there is a movement of minds that favors centralization of power in the hands of the President and Congress. I claim that an op-

posite movement is clearly observed. As the federal government grows older, far from gaining strength and threatening the sovereignty of the states, I say that it tends to become weaker each day, and that the sovereignty of the Union alone is in danger. That is what the present reveals. What will be the final result of this tendency, what events can stop, slow or hasten the movement that I have described? The future hides them, and I do not claim to be able to lift its veil.

Of Republican Institutions in the United States, What Are Their Chances of Lasting?

The Union is only an accident.—Republican institutions have more of a future.—The republic is, for now, the natural state of the Anglo-Americans.—Why.—In order to destroy it, it would be necessary to change all the laws at the same time and modify all the mores.—Difficulties that the Americans have in creating an aristocracy.

The dismemberment of the Union, by introducing war within the states confederated today and with it permanent armies, dictatorship and taxes, could in the long run compromise the fate of republican institutions there.

But you must not confuse the future of the republic with that of the Union.[x]

The Union is an accident that will only last as long as circumstances favor it, but the republic seems to me the natural state of the Americans, and only the continuous action of contrary causes acting always in the same way could replace it with monarchy.[y]

x. *"Division of the American empire./*

"When I spoke to Mr. Schermerhorn about the possible division that could take place among the united provinces, he seemed to me not to believe that the thing was to be feared in the least in the near future, but thinks that it could happen someday *by and by.*

"April 1831" (YTC, BIIb, unpublished travel note).

y. In the margin: "≠The republic in the United States does not arise only from the laws, but from the nature of the country, from habits, from mores.≠"

The Union exists principally in the law that created it. A single revolution, a change in public opinion can shatter it forever. The republic has deeper roots.[z]

z. Of the different ways that you can imagine the republic./

What is understood by republic in the United States is an ordered State actually based on the enlightened will of the people. It is a government where [v: liberty of discussion and thought reigns from which] resolutions mature over a long time, are debated slowly and are executed with maturity. What is called the republic in the United States is the tranquil rule of the majority. The majority, after it has had the time to recognize itself and to take note of its existence, is the source of all powers. But the majority itself is not omnipotent; above it in the moral world are found humanity and reason, in the material world, vested rights. The majority in its omnipotence recognizes these two barriers, and if it has sometimes happened to overturn them, it felt itself carried away by its passions beyond its rights, just as man constantly happens to do evil, while entirely recognizing the existence and the sanctity of virtue. That is what is understood by republic in the United States.

[In the margin: I cannot believe that the Roman republic could have begun at the time of Catilina./

It is this government that must leave to each man the largest part of his independence and liberty and that is the farthest removed from despotism.]

[To the side: In all the countries where this republic would be practical, I would be a republican.]

But we have made strange discoveries in Europe and we are much more advanced than that.

The republic according to certain men in Europe is not the rule of the majority as has been believed until now; it is the rule of those who speak in the name of the majority. It is not the people who act in these kinds of governments, it is those who want the greatest good for the people. Republican government is, moreover, the only one in which the right to do everything must be recognized and that must not keep strictly to any divine or human law in order to reach the end that it proposes, which is nothing other than the greatest happiness of humanity. This end in itself alone justifies all the rest.

[In the margin: Happy distinction that allows acting in the name of nations without consulting them.]

Republican liberty does not try to persuade but to break; it proceeds only by sudden movements and always has the ax or the hammer in hand in order to make its way in the world.

[In the margin: Republican liberty is the power to dare anything (illegible word, crossed out), it is scorn for all the rules, [v: holy laws] from those of morality to those of common sense.

You believed that the cause of aristocracy was lost. But here are (illegible word). I tell you that those men are the only partisans of aristocracy, at least not still the aristocracy of the rich and the nobles in truth. They are the aristocracy of cut-th[roats (ed.)]

[≠Dispersed over an immense and half empty[a] territory, the Americans have found themselves from the beginning divided into a great number of small distinct societies that were not naturally attached to a common center.

When I see one of these alleged republicans, it seems to me that I always hear him say [v: see the executioner in his official outfit standing on the scaffold crying out]: Peoples of the earth (for it is always the entire earth that he addresses from their [*sic*] rooftop) come to us, for except for your fathers there has never been anything more foolish than you, and if you do not put your destiny in our hands, you will never be able to prosper, unless we get involved in your destiny.

You imagined, fellow citizens, that the republic was by its nature a mild and prosperous government, and you thought that the trial that had formerly been made of it among us must not be imputed to the system itself, but to those who put it into practice and to the extraordinary circumstances in which the (illegible word) was found; know that the republic that we are proposing is very exactly the one that you have seen in the past, and that it can be established as such only with the aid of a profound and radical revolution in property and in ranks. Some have told you that the men made so famous by the misfortunes of a generation were madmen, miserable men intoxicated with power and blood by an unexpected success, and that you must not charge liberty with the evils that they did in its name. Beware of listening to such language, fellow citizens; the men that you hear about did only what they had to do. What are called their crimes are actions as beautiful as they are immortal. They sacrificed themselves for you, ungrateful men, even while slitting your throats. You would perhaps be tempted to believe that we, their successors, adopt their love for the good while deploring their errors; do not be mistaken, fellow citizens; we think that in our time as in theirs dictatorship alone can save the country and that liberty can be established only after punishing writers [v: all our adversaries] by death, and that respect for rights can arise only after trampling all rights under foot. [v: We admire on all points these great men and we burn to walk in their steps; while waiting, we kiss the sacred dust where they left their footprint. And even their costumes, holy relic, we would like to make reappear in order to begin from now on to resemble them in a few ways.]

So come to us dear fellow citizens, come so we can share your fortunes among ourselves [v: so we can trample your beliefs underfoot] and so we can cut your throat following the principles that we received from our fathers and that we will leave to our children. How to resist such language? Aren't these agreeable speeches and pleasant missionaries?

[To the side: As long as those who sincerely want the establishment of the republic do not push far away from their ranks such miserable men, the kings of Europe can still rest easy on their thrones] (YTC, CVh, 2, pp. 68–74).

This fragment, of complicated transcription, contains various other variants and versions.

a. While preparing the plan for this chapter, Tocqueville had noted: "The republic is in a way the natural state of *small, enlightened* States" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 43).

So it was necessary that each one of these small societies took care of its own affairs, since nowhere did you see a central authority that could naturally provide for them. Town and provincial liberty were introduced to America by the English, but they arose there all by themselves by the very nature of things. Now, town and provincial liberty are the basis of [v: the only lasting foundation that you can give to] republican institutions and as long as they exist in the United States, the United States will remain republican.≠]

What is understood by republic in the United States is the slow and tranquil action of society on itself. It is an ordered state actually based on the enlightened will of the people. It is a conciliatory government, where resolutions mature over a long time, are debated slowly and are executed with maturity.

Republicans in the United States value mores, respect beliefs, recognize rights. They profess this opinion, that a people must be moral, religious and moderate, in proportion as it is free. What is called a republic in the United States is the tranquil rule of the majority. The majority, after it has had the time to recognize itself and to take note of its existence, is the common source of powers. But the majority itself is not omnipotent. Above it in the moral world are found humanity, justice and reason; in the political world, vested rights. The majority recognizes these two barriers, and if it happens to cross them, it is because the majority has passions, like every man; and like him, it can do evil while perceiving good. [{For me, I will have no difficulty in saying, in all countries where the republic is practical, I will be republican.}]

But we have made strange discoveries in Europe.

According to some among us, the republic is not the rule of the majority, as we have believed until now; it is the rule of those who answer for the majority. It is not the people who lead these sorts of governments, but those who know the greatest good of the people: happy distinction, that allows acting in the name of nations without consulting them, and claiming their gratitude while trampling them underfoot.[b] Republican government is,

b. "≠Royalty has had its valets and its spies, why would the republic not have its cutthroats?

moreover, the only one in which the right to do everything must be recognized, and that can despise what men until now have respected, from the highest laws of morality to the ordinary rules of common sense.

Until our time it had been thought that despotism was odious, whatever its forms. But it has been discovered in our day that there are legitimate tyrannies and holy injustices in the world, provided that they are exercised in the name of the people.

[≠That is not a vague theory; they are maxims that are professed while basing them on facts. These doctrines have found ardent missionaries. I believe that I hear them saying to us:

You imagined, they say to us, that the republic was by its nature a free and tolerant government, and you thought perhaps that the trial that had formerly been made of it among us must not be imputed to the system itself, but to those who put it into practice and to the extraordinary circumstances in which this country found itself.≠][c]

The ideas that the Americans have formed about the republic singularly facilitate its use for them and ensure that it will last.[d] Among them, if the practice of republican government is often bad, at least the theory is good, and the people always finish by conforming their acts to it.

It was impossible in the beginning and it would still be very difficult in America to establish a centralized administration. Men are spread over too large a space and are separated by too many natural obstacles for one man to be able to undertake to direct the details of their existence. So America is par excellence the country of provincial and town government.

"An aristocracy of wolves, worse.

"Great capitals annul the representative system≠" (YTC, CVj, 2, p. 22).

c. In the margin: "≠Some limit themselves to praising the disinterestedness of Robespierre and the greatness of soul of Danton. Others go still further.≠"

d. Tocqueville wrote to Ernest de Chabrol, 9 June 1831:

> Here we are very far from the ancient republics, it must be admitted, and yet this people is republican and I do not doubt that it will be for a long time still. And the republic is for it the best of governments.
>
> I explain this phenomenon to myself only by thinking that America finds itself for now in a physical situation so happy that particular interest is never contrary to general interest, which is certainly not the case in Europe (YTC, BIa2).

To this cause, whose action made itself equally felt on all the Europeans of the New World, the Anglo-Americans added several others that are particular to them.

When the colonies of North America were established, municipal liberty had already penetrated English laws as well as mores, and the English emigrants adopted it not only as something necessary, but also as a good whose value they knew.

[We have seen furthermore that in this matter the influence exercised by the country has been greater or lesser depending on the circumstances that accompanied colonization and the previously contracted habits of the colonists.

The French carried to America the tradition of absolute monarchy; the English came there with the customs of a free people.

≠When the French arrived in Canada they first founded a city that they called Québec. From this city the population spread little by little by degrees, like a tree that spreads it roots in a circle. Québec has remained the central point, and the French of Canada are still today only one and the same people, submitted in most cases to one and the same government.≠

{It was not this way in the United States, above all in the part of the country that was called New England.}] We have seen, furthermore, how the colonies were founded. Each province and each district so to speak was populated separately by men strangers to one another, or associated for different ends.

So the English of the United States found themselves from the beginning divided into a great number of small distinct societies that were attached to no common center, and it was necessary for each one of these small societies to take care of its own affairs, since nowhere did you see a central authority that naturally had to and easily could provide for them.

Thus the nature of the country, the very manner in which the English colonies were founded, the habits of the first emigrants, all united to develop town and provincial liberties there to an extraordinary degree.

In the United States the institutions of the country are therefore as a whole essentially republican; to destroy in a lasting way the laws that established the republic, it would be necessary in a way to abolish all the laws all at once.

If today a party undertook to establish a monarchy in the United States, it would be in a still more difficult position than whoever would want at the present moment to proclaim the republic in France. Royalty would not find legislation prepared for it in advance, and then in actual fact you would see a monarchy surrounded by republican institutions.[e]

The monarchical principle would penetrate with as much difficulty into the mores of the Americans.

In the United States, the dogma of the sovereignty of the people is not an isolated doctrine that is attached neither to the habits nor to the ensemble of dominant ideas; you can on the contrary envisage it as the last link in a chain of opinions that envelops the entire Anglo-American world. Providence has given to each individual, what ever he is, the degree of reason necessary for him to be able to direct himself in the things that interest him exclusively. Such is the great maxim on which in the United States civil and political society rests: the father of the family applies it to his children, the master to his servants, the town to those it administers, the province to the town, the state to the provinces, the Union to the states. Extended to the whole of the nation, it becomes the dogma of the sovereignty of the people.

[≠So the republican principle of the sovereignty of the people is not only a political principle, but also a civil principle.≠]

Thus in the United States the generative principle of the republic is the same one that regulates most human actions. So the republic, if I can express myself in this way, penetrates the ideas, the opinions and all the habits of the Americans at the same time that it is established in their laws; and in order to succeed in changing the laws, they would have to be changed wholesale as it were. In the United States the religion of the greatest number itself is republican; it subjects the truths of the other world to individual reason, as politics relinquishes to the good sense of all the responsibility for the interests of this one; and it agrees that each man should freely take the

e. "25 October 1831.—The people are always right, that is the dogma of the republic the same as the king can do no wrong is the religion of monarchical States. It is a great question to know if one is more false than the other; but what is very certain is that neither the one nor the other is true" (pocket notebook 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 184).

path that will lead him to heaven, in the same way that the law recognizes the right of each citizen to choose his government.

Clearly only a long series of facts, all having the same tendency, can substitute for this ensemble of laws, opinions and mores an ensemble of the opposite mores, opinions and laws.

If the republican principles must perish in America, they will succumb only after a long social effort, frequently interrupted, often resumed; several times they will seem to arise again, and will disappear never to return only when an entirely new people will have taken the place of those who exist today. Now, nothing can portend such a revolution, no sign announces it.

What strikes you the most on your arrival in the United States is the type of tumultuous movement in which political society is immersed. The laws change constantly, and at first view it seems impossible that a people so little sure of its will does not soon substitute for the present form of its government an entirely new form. These fears are premature. There are as regards political institutions two types of instability that must not be confused. The one is attached to secondary laws; that one can reign for a long time within a well-settled society. The other constantly shakes the very foundations of the constitution, and attacks the generative principles of the laws; this one is always followed by troubles and revolutions; the nation that suffers it is in a violent and transitory state. Experience demonstrates that these two types of legislative instability do not have a necessary link between them, for we have seen them exist conjoined or separately depending on times and places. The first is found in the United States, but not the second. The Americans frequently change the laws, but the foundation of the Constitution is respected.

Today the republican principle reigns in America as the monarchical principle dominated in France under Louis XIV. The French of that time were not only friends of monarchy, but also they did not imagine that you could put anything in its place; they acknowledged it as you acknowledge the course of the sun and the vicissitudes of the seasons. Among them royal power had no more advocates than adversaries.

This is how the republic exists in America, without struggle, without opposition, without proof, by a tacit agreement, a sort of *consensus universalis.*

Nonetheless, I think that by changing their administrative procedures as often as they do, the inhabitants of the United States compromise the future of republican government.

Hampered constantly in their projects by the continual changeability of legislation, it is to be feared that men will end up considering the republic as an inconvenient way to live in society; the evil resulting from the instability of secondary laws would then put into question the existence of the fundamental laws, and would lead indirectly to a revolution. But this time is still very far from us.

What you can foresee from now on is that by leaving the republic the Americans would pass rapidly to despotism, without stopping for a very long time at monarchy. Montesquieu said that there was nothing more absolute than the authority of a prince who followed a republic since the undefined powers that had been given without fear to an elective magistrate are then put into the hands of a hereditary leader.[f] This is generally true but particularly applicable to a democratic republic. In the United States the magistrates are not elected by a particular class of citizens, but by the majority of the nation; they represent immediately the passions of the multitude, and depend entirely on its will; so they inspire neither hate nor fear. Also I have noted the little care that has been taken to limit their powers by tracing limits to its action, and what an immense share has been left to their arbitrariness. This order of things has created habits that would survive it. The American magistrate would keep his undefined power while ceasing to be responsible, and it is impossible to say where tyranny would then stop.

[≠If Napoleon had followed Louis XIV, {he would have found royal power strong but surrounded by impediments that would have imposed limits on his spirit of domination} he would have shown himself more stable but not as absolute as he was. Napoleon following a representative of the people could do anything.≠]

There are men among us who are waiting to see aristocracy arise in Amer-

f. Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes et la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* chapter XV, in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1951), I, p. 150.

ica and who already foresee with exactitude the period when it must grasp power.

I have already said, and I repeat, that the current movement of American society seems to me more and more democratic.

I do not claim, however, that one day the Americans will not end by restricting among themselves the circle of political rights, or by confiscating these very rights for the profit of one man; but I cannot believe that they will ever grant the exclusive use of those rights to a particular class of citizens or, in other words, that they will establish an aristocracy.

An aristocratic body is composed of a certain number of citizens who, without being placed very far from the crowd, raise themselves nonetheless in a permanent manner above it; you touch and cannot strike them; you mix with them each day, and cannot merge with them.

It is impossible to imagine anything more contrary to the nature and to the secret instincts of the human heart than a subjugation of this type; left to themselves men will always prefer the arbitrary power of a king to the regular administration of nobles.

In order to last an aristocracy needs to establish inequality in principle, to legalize it in advance, and to introduce it into the family at the same time that it spreads it throughout the society; all things that repulse natural equity so strongly that only by coercion can you obtain them from men.

Since human societies have existed I do not believe that you can cite the example of a single people that, left to itself and by its own efforts, has created an aristocracy within itself; all the aristocracies of the Middle Ages are daughters of conquest. The conqueror was the noble, the conquered the serf. Force then imposed inequality, which once entered into the mores lasted by itself and passed naturally into the laws.

You have seen societies that, because of events prior to their existence, are so to speak born aristocratic, and that are then led by each century back toward democracy. Such was the fate of the Romans, and that of the barbarians who came after them. But a people who, starting from civilization and democracy, would come closer by degrees to inequality of conditions, and would finish by establishing within itself inviolable privileges and exclusive categories, there is something that would be new in the world.

Nothing indicates that America is destined to be the first to give such a spectacle.

[≠I do not know if the Americans, like all peoples who have run the course before them, will end by submitting to one master, but I cannot believe that they will ever have a true aristocracy./

A party that undertook to establish monarchy in America today would find itself in as difficult a position as the one that wanted to proclaim the republic in France. In France you would implant the republican principle in the middle of secondary institutions that are still eminently monarchical. In America you would establish a king who would find in his hands only republican institutions.≠]

Some Considerations on the Causes of the Commercial Greatness of the United States

The Americans are called by nature to be a great maritime people.—Extent of their shores.—Depth of the ports.—Greatness of the rivers.—It is however much less to physical causes than to intellectual and moral causes that you must attribute the commercial superiority of the Anglo-Americans.—Reason for this opinion.—Future of the Anglo-Americans as commercial people.—The ruin of the Union would not stop the maritime development of the peoples who compose it.—Why.—The Anglo-Americans are naturally called to serve the needs of the inhabitants of South America.—They will become, like the English, the carriers of a large part of the world.

From the Bay of Fundy to the Sabine River in the Gulf of Mexico, the coast of the United States extends the length of about nine hundred leagues.

These coasts form a single unbroken line; they are all placed under the same rule.

No people in the world can offer to commerce deeper, more vast and more secure ports than the Americans.

The inhabitants of the United States form a great civilized nation that

fortune has placed in the middle of the wilderness, twelve hundred leagues from the principal center of civilization. So America has daily need of Europe. With time the Americans will undoubtedly manage to produce or to manufacture at home most of the objects that they need, but the two continents will never be able to live entirely independent of each other; too many natural bonds exist between their needs, their ideas, their habits and their mores.

[≠Europe has no less need of the United States than the latter of Europe.≠]

The Union has products that have become necessary to us, and that our soil totally refuses to provide, or can do so only at great cost. The Americans consume only a very small part of these products; they sell us the rest.

So Europe is the market of America, as America is the market of Europe; and maritime commerce is as necessary to the inhabitants of the United States in order to bring their raw materials to our ports as to transport our manufactured goods to them.

So the United States would have to provide great resources to the industry of maritime peoples, if they gave up commerce themselves, as the Spanish of Mexico have done until now; or they would have to become one of the premier maritime powers of the globe. This alternative was inevitable.

The Anglo-Americans have at all times shown a decided taste for the sea. Independence, by breaking the commercial ties that united them to England, gave their maritime genius a new and powerful development. Since this period the number of ships of the Union has increased in a progression almost as rapid as the number of inhabitants. Today it is the Americans themselves who carry to their shores nine-tenths of the products of Europe.[91] It is also

91. *The total value of imports for the year ending 30 September 1832 was 101,029,266 dollars. Imports brought on foreign ships represented only a sum total of 10,731,037 dollars, about one tenth.*[g]

g. Tocqueville obtained this information from the *American Almanac* for 1834, pp. 141–42.

the Americans who carry to European consumers three-quarters of the exports of the New World.[92]

The ships of the United States fill the port of Le Havre and that of Liverpool. You see only a small number of English or French vessels in the port of New York.[93]

Thus not only does the American merchant stand up to the competition on his own soil, but he also fights foreigners with advantage on theirs.

This is easily explained. Of all the vessels of the world it is the ships of the United States that cross the seas most cheaply. As long as the merchant marine of the United States keeps this advantage over the others, not only will it keep what it has conquered, but each day it will increase its conquests.

To know why the Americans sail at lower cost than other men is a difficult problem to solve. You are tempted at first to attribute this superiority to some material advantages that nature would have put within their reach alone; but it is not that.

American ships cost almost as much to build as ours;[94] they are not better constructed, and in general do not last as long.

The salary of the American sailor is higher than that of the sailor of

92. *The total value of exports during the same year was 87,176,943 dollars; the value exported on foreign vessels was 21,036,183 dollars, or about one quarter (*William's Register, *1833, p. 398).*

93. *During the years 1829, 1830, 1831, ships with a total tonnage of 3,307,719 entered the ports of the Union. Foreign ships provided a tonnage of only 544,591 of the total. So they were in the proportion of about 16 to 100 (*National Calendar, *1833, p. 304 [305 (ed.)]).*

*During the years 1820, 1826 and 1831, English vessels that entered the ports of London, Liverpool and Hull had a tonnage of 443,800. Foreign vessels that entered the same ports during the same years had a tonnage of 159,431. So the relationship between them was about as 36 to 100 (*Companion to the Almanac, *1834, p. 169).*

In the year 1832, the relationship of foreign ships and English ships that entered the ports of Great Britain was as 20 to 100.

94. *Raw materials in general cost less in America than in Europe, but the price of labor is very much higher there.*

Europe; what proves it is the large number of Europeans that you find in the merchant marine of the United States.[h]

So how do the Americans sail more cheaply than we?

I think that you would look in vain for the causes of this superiority in material advantages; it is due to purely intellectual and moral qualities.

Here is a comparison that will make my thought clear.

During the wars of the Revolution the French introduced into military art a new tactic that troubled the oldest generals and all but destroyed the oldest monarchies of Europe. They undertook for the first time to do without a host of things that until then had been judged indispensable to war; they required from their soldiers new efforts that civilized nations had never demanded from theirs; you saw them do everything on the run, and without hesitating risk the life of men in view of the result to be gained.

The French were less numerous and less rich than their enemies; they possessed infinitely fewer resources; they were constantly victorious, however, until the latter decided to imitate them.

The Americans introduced something analogous to commerce. What the French did for victory, they do for economy.[j]

The European navigator ventures only with prudence onto the sea; he leaves only when the weather is inviting; if an unforeseen accident happens to him, he returns to port; at night he furls part of his sails, and when he

h. *Commerce.*
Mr. *Schermerhorn* claimed that the construction of vessels, the pay of sailors and the different expenses of navigation cost more for the Americans than for the French; he attributed the superiority of the first only to their extreme activity, constantly stimulated by the passion to make a fortune, and the almost total absence of restriction. *It is an established opinion in France that the Americans are the merchants of the world who sail at least expense.*
April 1831 (unpublished travel note, YTC, BIIa).

j. "The Americans apply to commerce the same principles and the same manner that Bonaparte applied to war" (YTC, CVj, 2, p. 18).

sees the Ocean turn white as land nears, he slows his course and checks the sun.

The American neglects these precautions and defies these dangers. He leaves while the storm is still raging; night and day he spreads all of his sails to the wind; while in route, he repairs his ship strained by the storm; and when he finally approaches the end of his journey, he continues to sail toward the shore as if he already saw port. [≠He often perishes, but even more often he reaches port before his competitors.≠]

The American is often shipwrecked;[k] but no navigator crosses the sea as rapidly as he. [≠Of all men the American seems to me to be the one who has conceived the greatest and the most accurate idea of the value of time. There is no portion so small of day or night that does not have a value . . . in his eyes. He saves hours as the Dutch merchant saved capital. That is the secret of his success.≠] Doing the same things that someone else does in less time, he can do them at less cost.

Before coming to the end of a long voyage, the European navigator believes that he must touch land several times on his way. He loses precious time looking for a port of call or awaiting the opportunity to leave one, and each day he pays the duty to remain there.

The American navigator leaves from Boston to go to buy tea in China. He arrives in Canton, remains there a few days and comes back. He has covered in less than two years the entire circumference of the globe, and he has seen land only once. During a crossing of eight or ten months he has drunk brackish water and lived on salted meat; he has fought constantly against the sea, against disease, against boredom; but upon his return he can sell a pound of tea for one penny less than the English merchant. The goal is reached.

I cannot express my thought better than by saying that the Americans put a kind of heroism in their way of doing commerce.

k. Francis Grund (*The Americans, in Their Moral, Social and Political Relations,* Boston: Marsh, Capen and Lyon, 1837, pp. 293–94) denies this assertion. In his opinion the number of accidents was not proportionately higher in the American navy, because the number of miles covered by American ships was superior to that covered by European ships. Grund is inspired otherwise on many occasions by the *Democracy,* without ever ceasing to criticize Tocqueville.

[≠Heroism that is not only calculation, but also suggested by nature.

Natural heroism that must give them not only the trade of America but make them carriers to nations.≠]

It will always be very difficult for the merchant of Europe to follow the same course as his competitor from America. The American, while acting in the way I described above, is following not only a calculation; he is above all obeying his nature.

The inhabitant of the United States experiences all the needs and all the desires to which an advanced civilization gives rise, and he does not find around him as in Europe a society skillfully organized to satisfy them; so he is often obliged to obtain by himself the various objects that his education and his habits have made necessary for him. In America it sometimes happens that the same man plows his field, builds his house, fashions his tools, makes his shoes and weaves by hand the crude fabric that has to cover him. This harms the perfection of industry, but serves powerfully to develop the intelligence of the worker. There is nothing that tends more to materialize man and remove from his work even the trace of soul than the great division of labor. [<With the division of labor you do better and more economically what you already did, but you do not innovate. The division of labor is an element of wealth more than of progress.

The art of dividing labor is the art of confiscating the intelligence of the greatest number for the profit of a few.>][m] In a country like America where

m. *Intelligence of the people in America./*

It has been noted in Europe that division of labor made man infinitely more suitable for taking care of the detail to which he was applying himself, but reduced his *general capacity.* The worker thus classed becomes past master in his specialty, brute in all the rest. Example of England. Frightening state of the working classes in this country.

What makes the American of the people so intelligent a man is that the division of labor does not exist so to speak in America. Each man does a little of everything. He does each thing not as well as the European who takes care of it exclusively, but his general capacity is one hundred times greater. Great cause of superiority in the habitual matters of life and in the government of society (YTC, CVe, p. 53).

J. B. Say had criticized the effects of the division of labor in chapter VIII of the first volume of his *Traité d'économie politique.* Tocqueville and Beaumont read Say aboard the *Havre* during their Atlantic crossing. We do not know if it was the *Traité* or the six volumes of *Cours d'économie politique.* In 1834 when he prepared his memoir on pauperism, following his visit to England the preceding year, Tocqueville also read the work

specialized men are so rare, you cannot require a long apprenticeship of each one of those who take up a profession. So the Americans find it very easy to change profession, and they make the most of it, depending on the needs of the moment. You meet some of them who have been successively lawyers, farmers, merchants, evangelical ministers, doctors. If the American is less skillful than the European in each trade, there are hardly any of them that are entirely unknown to him. His ability is more general, the circle of his intelligence is wider. So the inhabitant of the United States is never stopped by any axiom of trade; he escapes all prejudices of profession; he is no more attached to one system of operation than to another; he does not feel more tied to an old method than to a new one; he has created no habit for himself, and he easily escapes from the sway that foreign habits could exercise over his mind, for he knows that his country resembles no other, and that its situation is new in the world [so he always follows his reason and never practice].

The American inhabits a land of wonders, around him everything is constantly stirring, and each movement seems to be an improvement. So the idea of the new is intimately linked in his mind to the idea of the better. Nowhere does he see the limit that nature might have put on the efforts of man; in his eyes what is not is what has not yet been attempted.[n]

This universal movement that reigns in the United States, these frequent reversals of fortune, this unexpected displacement of public and private wealth, all join together to keep the soul in a sort of feverish agitation that admirably disposes it to all efforts, and maintains it so to speak above [itself and] the common level of humanity. For an American all of life happens like a game of chance, a time of revolution, a day of battle.

These same causes, operating at the same time on all individuals, finish

of Viscount Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont (*Economie politique chrétienne, ou recherches sur la nature et les causes du paupérisme* . . . , Paris: Paulin, 1834, 3 vols.), in which England is the constant example of the evils produced by the excesses of industry.

n. "≠For the American the past is in a way like the future: it does not exist. He sees nowhere the natural limit that nature has put on the efforts of man; according to him what is not, is what has not yet been tried≠" (YTC, CVh, 2, p. 47).

by stamping an irresistible impulse on the national character. So an American taken at random must be a man ardent in his desires, enterprising, adventurous, above all an innovator. This spirit is found in fact in all his works; he introduces it into his political laws, into his religious doctrines, into his theories of social economy, into his private industry; he carries it everywhere with him, deep in the woods, as well as within the cities. It is this same spirit applied to maritime commerce that makes the American sail more quickly and more cheaply than all the merchants of the world.

As long as the sailors of the United States keep these intellectual advantages and the practical superiority that derives from them, not only will they continue to provide for the needs of the producers and consumers of their country, but also they will tend more and more to become, like the English,[95] the carriers of other peoples.

This is beginning to be achieved before our eyes. Already we are seeing American sailors introduce themselves as middlemen in the commerce of several of the nations of Europe;[96] America offers them an even greater future.

The Spanish and the Portuguese founded in South America great colonies that have since become empires. Civil war and despotism today desolate these vast countries. The population movement is stopping, and the small number of men who live there, absorbed by the concern of defending themselves, scarcely feel the need to improve their lot.

But it cannot always be so. Europe left to itself managed by its own efforts to pierce the shadows of the Middle Ages; South America is Christian like us; it has our laws, our customs; it contains all the seeds of civilization that have developed within European nations and their offshoots; beyond what we had, South America has our example: why would it remain forever barbarous?

95. *It must not be believed that English vessels are uniquely occupied in transporting foreign goods to England or in transporting English products to foreigners; today the merchant marine of England is like a great enterprise of public carts, ready to serve all producers of the world and to connect all peoples. The maritime genius of the Americans leads them to raise an enterprise rivaling that of the English [and often they will manage to serve the same producers more cheaply].*

96. *One part of the commerce of the Mediterranean is already done on American vessels.*

It is clearly only a question of time here. A more or less distant period will undoubtedly come when the South Americans will form flourishing and enlightened nations.

But when the Spanish and the Portuguese of South America begin to experience the needs of civilized peoples, they will still be far from able to satisfy them themselves; newly born to civilization, they will be subject to the superiority already acquired by their elders. They will be farmers for a long time before becoming manufacturers and merchants, and they will need the intervention of foreigners in order to go and sell their products overseas and to obtain in exchange the objects whose necessity will now make itself felt.

You cannot doubt that the Americans of North America are called one day to provide for the needs of the Americans of South America. Nature placed the first near the second. It thus provided the North Americans with great opportunities to know and estimate the needs of the South Americans, to strike up permanent relations with these peoples, and gradually to take possession of their market. The merchant of the United States could lose these natural advantages only if he was very inferior to the merchant of Europe; and he is, on the contrary, superior to him on several points. The Americans of the United States already exercise a great moral influence over all the peoples of the New World. From them comes enlightenment. All the nations that inhabit the same continent are already accustomed to considering them as the most enlightened, most powerful and wealthiest offshoots of the great American family. So they turn their view constantly toward the Union and they assimilate themselves, as much as it is within their power, to the peoples that compose it. Each day they come to draw political doctrines from the United States and borrow laws from them.

The Americans of the United States are vis-à-vis the peoples of South America precisely in the same situation as their fathers, the English, vis-à-vis the Italians, the Spanish, the Portuguese and all those peoples of Europe who, being less advanced in civilization and industry, receive from their hands most of the objects of consumption.

England is today the natural center of commerce of nearly all the nations that are near it; the American Union is called to fulfill the same role in the other hemisphere. So every people that arises or that grows up in the New

World arises and grows up there in a way to the profit of the Anglo-American.

If the Union came to break up, the commerce of the states that formed it would undoubtedly be slowed for some time in its development, but less than is thought. It is clear that whatever happens the commercial states will remain united. They all touch each other; among them there is a perfect identity of opinion, interests and mores, and alone they can make up a very great maritime power. Thus even if the South of the Union became independent of the North, the result would not be that it could do without the North. I said that the South is not commercial; nothing yet indicates that it must become so.[*] So the Americans of the South of the United States will be obliged for a long time to resort to foreigners in order to export their products and to bring to them the objects that are necessary for their needs. Now of all the middlemen that they can take their neighbors of the North are surely those who can serve them more cheaply. So they will serve them, for the lowest price is the supreme law of commerce. There is no sovereign will or national prejudices that can struggle for long against the lowest price. You cannot see more venomous hatred than that which exists between the Americans of the United States and the English. In spite of these hostile sentiments, however, the English provide to the Americans most manufactured goods, for the sole reason that the English sell them for less than other peoples. The growing prosperity of America thus turns, despite the desire of the Americans, to the profit of the manufacturing industry of England.

[*]. ≠This is due to the combination of several natural causes whose influence it is very difficult to combat. The South, if you thus call all the country situated south of the Potomac, possesses very few good mercantile ports and has no military port except Norfolk in Virginia.

As long as slavery exists in [the (ed.)] South you will not be able to recruit sailors there. The population that provides sailors in the North does not exist in the South; it is replaced there by slaves who cannot be used to do commerce.[1] We have seen moreover that slavery takes away from the Americans of the South some of the qualities most appropriate for succeeding on the seas.≠

1. ≠They would not serve as well as white sailors and would desert in foreign countries.≠

Reason shows and experience proves that no commercial greatness is lasting if it cannot be combined as needed with military power.

This truth is as well understood in the United States as anywhere else. The Americans are already in the position of making their flag respected; soon they will be able to make it feared.

I am persuaded that the dismemberment of the Union, far from diminishing the naval forces of the Americans, would tend strongly to increase them. Today the commercial states are linked to those that are not commercial, and the latter often go along only reluctantly with increasing a maritime power from which they profit only indirectly.

If, on the contrary, all the commercial states of the Union formed only one and the same people, trade would become for them a national interest of the first order, so they would be disposed to make very great sacrifices to protect their ships, and nothing would prevent them from following their desires on this point.

[In the present condition in which the affairs of the commercial world find themselves, there is no policy more naturally indicated than that of France.

France is called to be always one of the great maritime powers, but she can never become the first except by chance. Since France cannot hope to dominate the sea in a lasting way, her visible interest is to prevent another from dominating there [v: to rise up against the domination of the sea] and to make the most liberal maxims as regards commerce prevail in the whole world.

Even if the principle of the independence of neutral nations were not based on the right of nations, France should therefore still uphold it with all her strength. The independence of neutral nations is a guarantee against maritime tyranny, and France is the necessary champion of freedom of the seas.

It is from this point of view that France is the natural enemy of England. She will always be so whatever you do, as long as England is able to impose its laws on the ocean.

America is at present in a position analogous to that of France. It is powerful without being able to dominate; it is liberal because it cannot oppress.

So America is the natural ally of France, in the same way that England is its enemy.[o] Everything that is done to the profit of the naval greatness of the United States is done in a way to the profit of France; for the maritime power of the Americans, by increasing, divides the dominion of the sea and gives to the French the liberty that they need.

If maritime forces come to reach a balance between England and America, which will happen I think in a period that is not far away, the role of France will be, by going alternately to the side of the weaker, to prevent either one of them from entirely dominating the sea and thus to maintain liberty there.

But this balance itself will not be settled.]

I think that nations, like men, almost always show from their youth the principal features of their destiny. When I see in what spirit the Anglo-Americans manage commerce, the opportunities that they find for doing it, the successes that they achieve, I cannot keep myself from believing that one day they will become the premier maritime power of the globe. They are pushed to take possession of the seas, as the Romans to conquer the world.

o. Tocqueville expressed himself in similar terms in a letter to John C. Spencer of 10 November 1841 (Virginia Historical Society, reproduced in *Correspondance étrangère, OC,* VII, pp. 84–86). Two years later he explains to Niles: "I have let the chain of my relationships with the United States break a bit. I regret it. I would like to renew it. I place there an interest of heart and also of patriotism, for one of the foundations of my politics is that in spite of prejudices and quarrels over details, France and the United States are allies so natural and so necessary to one another that they must never for a moment lose sight of one another" (Letter of 15 June 1843, YTC, DIIa). Tocqueville's brief time at the ministry of foreign affairs coincided paradoxically with a moment of great tension between the two countries.

Conclusion[a]

Here I am approaching the end. Until now, while speaking of the future destiny of the United States, I forced myself to divide my subject into various parts in order to study each one of them with more care.

Now I would like to bring all of them together in a single point of view. What I will say will be less detailed, but more sure. I will see each object less distinctly; I will take up general facts with more certitude. I will be like a traveler who, while coming outside the walls of a vast city, climbs up the adjacent hill. As he moves away, the men that he has just left disappear from his view; their houses blend together; he no longer sees the public squares; he makes out the path of the streets with difficulty; but his eyes follow more easily the contours of the city, and for the first time he grasps its form. It seems to me that I too discover before me the whole future of the English race in the New World. The details of this immense tableau have remained in shadow; but my eyes take in the entire view, and I conceive a clear idea of the whole.

The territory occupied or possessed today by the United States of America forms about one-twentieth of inhabited lands.[b]

However extensive these limits are, you would be wrong to believe that the Anglo-American race will stay within them forever; it is already spreading very far beyond.

There was a time when we too were able to create in the American wil-

a. In the manuscript, the conclusion is found in a jacket with the title: ≠FUTURE OF THE REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLE IN THE UNITED STATES.≠

b. In an earlier draft, the conclusion began here with this paragraph: "≠The American confederation occupies or possesses a territory whose surface is estimated at 2,257,374[1] square miles. Thus the United States alone has under its domination about one-twentieth of inhabited lands.≠

"1. ≠ *View of the United States,* by Darby, p. 57.≠"

derness a great French nation and balance the destinies of the New World with the English. France formerly possessed in North America a territory nearly as vast as the whole of Europe. The three greatest[c] rivers of the continent then flowed entirely under our laws. The Indian nations that live from the mouth of the Saint Lawrence to the Mississippi delta heard only our language spoken; all the European settlements spread over this immense space recalled the memory of the homeland; they were Louisbourg, Montmorency, Duquesne, Saint-Louis, Vincennes, La Nouvelle Orléans, all names dear to France and familiar to our ears.

But a combination of circumstances that would be too long to enumerate[1] deprived us of this magnificent heritage. Everyplace where the French were too few and not well established, they disappeared. What was left gathered into a small space and passed under other laws. The four hundred thousand French of Lower Canada today form like the remnant of an ancient people lost amid the waves of a new nation.[d] Around them the foreign population grows constantly; it is spreading in all directions; it even penetrates the ranks of the former masters of the soil, dominates in their cities, and distorts their

c. The manuscript says: "The two greatest . . ."

1. *In first place this one: free peoples accustomed to the municipal regime succeed much more easily than others in creating flourishing colonies. The habit of thinking for yourself and governing yourself is indispensable in a new country, where success necessarily depends in large part on the individual efforts of the colonists.*

d. In a small fragment belonging to one of the appendices of the *Penitentiary System,* Tocqueville explains why according to him the French do not have good colonies (repeated in *Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, pp. 35–40). Among the reasons advanced he cites the continental character of France, the love of the Frenchman for his country, the legal habits and bad political education that accustom citizens to the existence of a tutelary power ready to help in the slightest difficulty. In the same way Tocqueville explains how Canada, even better than France, allows the damaging effects of administrative centralization to be studied (*L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, OC,* II, 1, pp. 286–87). See in this regard: Jean-Michel Leclerq, "Alexis de Tocqueville in Canada (24 August to 2 September 1831)," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 22, no. 3 (1968): 356–64; Edgar McInnis, "A Letter from Alexis de Tocqueville on the Canadian Rebellion of 1837," *Canadian Historical Review* 19, no. 4 (1938): 394–97; and Gérard Bergeron, *Quand Tocqueville et Siegfried nous observaient . . .* (Quebec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1990).

language. This population is identical to that of the United States. So I am right to say that the English race does not stop at the limits of the Union, but is advancing very far beyond toward the northeast.

In the northwest you find only a few unimportant Russian settlements; but in the southwest Mexico arises before the steps of the Anglo-American like a barrier.

Thus there are truly speaking only two rival races that share the New World today, the Spanish and the English.

The limits that are to separate these two races have been fixed by a treaty. But however favorable this treaty may be to the Anglo-Americans, I do not doubt that they are soon going to break it.

Beyond the frontiers of the Union, next to Mexico, extend vast provinces that still lack inhabitants. The men of the United States will penetrate these uninhabited areas even before those who have the right to occupy them. They will appropriate the soil, they will establish a society, and when the rightful owner finally appears, he will find the wilderness made fertile and foreigners calmly settled on his inheritance.

The land of the New World belongs to the first occupant, and empire is the prize for the race.

Countries already populated will have difficulty protecting themselves from invasion.

I have already spoken before about what is happening in the province of Texas. Each day the inhabitants of the United States enter little by little into Texas; they acquire lands there, and even while submitting to the laws of the country, they are establishing the dominion of their language and their mores. The province of Texas is still under the rule of Mexico; but soon you will no longer find any Mexicans there so to speak. Something similar is happening everywhere the Anglo-Americans enter into contact with populations of another origin.

You cannot conceal the fact that the English race has acquired an immense preponderance over all the other European races of the New World. It is very superior to them in civilization, in industry and in power. As long as it has before it only uninhabited or sparsely inhabited countries, as long as it does not find in its path aggregated populations, through which it will

be impossible for it to clear a passage, you will see it spread without ceasing. It will not stop at lines drawn in treaties, but will overflow these imaginary dikes from all directions.

[{The Constitution of the United States has been credited with the progress that the population makes each year.}]

What also marvelously facilitates this rapid development of the English race in the New World is the geographic position that it occupies there.

When you go up toward the north above its northern frontiers, you find polar ice, and when you descend a few degrees below its southern limits, you get into the heat of the equator. So the English of America are located in the most temperate zone and the most habitable part of the continent.

You imagine that the prodigious movement that is noted in the increase of the population of the United States dates only from independence. That is an error. The population grew as quickly under the colonial system as today; it doubled the same in about twenty-two years. But then it applied to thousands of inhabitants; now it applies to millions. The same fact that passed unnoticed a century ago strikes all minds today.[e]

The English of Canada, who obey a king, increase in number and spread almost as quickly as the English of the United States, who live under a republican government.

During the eight years that the War of Independence lasted, the population did not cease to increase following the proportion previously indicated.

Although there then existed on the frontiers of the West great Indian nations allied with the English, the movement of emigration toward the West never, so to speak, relented. While the enemy ravaged the coasts of the Atlantic, Kentucky, the western districts of Pennsylvania, the state of Vermont and that of Maine filled up with inhabitants. Nor did the

e. In the margin: "≠Nothing can slow it,
neither political event,
nor civil discords,
nor bad laws, nor wars.≠"

disorder that followed the war prevent the population from growing and stop its progressive march into the wilderness. Thus the difference in laws, the state of peace or the state of war, order or anarchy, influenced only in an imperceptible way the successive development of the Anglo-Americans.

This is easily understood. No causes exist that are general enough to make themselves felt at the same time at all the points of a territory so immense. Thus there is always a large portion of the country where you are sure to find a shelter from the calamities that strike another, and however great the evils may be, the remedy offered is always greater still.

So it must not be believed that it is possible to stop the expansion of the English race of the New World. The dismemberment of the Union, by leading to war on the continent, the abolition of the republic, by introducing tyranny there, can retard its development, but not prevent it from attaining the necessary complement of its destiny. There is no power on earth that can close to the steps of the emigrants this fertile wilderness that is open in all areas to industry and that presents a refuge from all miseries. Future events, whatever they may be, will not take away from the Americans either their climate, or their interior seas, or their great rivers, or the fertility of their soil. Bad laws, revolution and anarchy, cannot destroy among them the taste for well-being and the spirit of enterprise that seems the distinctive character of their race, or completely extinguish the knowledge that enlightens them.

[≠It would be as easy to stop the waves of the sea as to prevent the waves of Anglo-American emigration from reaching the shores of the Pacific Ocean.≠]

Thus amid the uncertainty of the future there is at least one event that is certain. At some period that we can call near at hand, since it concerns the life of peoples, the Anglo-Americans will cover alone all the immense space included between the areas of polar ice and the tropics; they will spread from the strands of the Atlantic Ocean to the shores of the Pacific.

I think that the territory over which the Anglo-American race must

someday spread equals three-quarters of Europe.[2] The climate of the Union is, everything considered, preferable to that of Europe; its natural advantages are as great; it is clear that its population cannot fail one day to be proportionate to ours.

Europe, divided among so many diverse peoples; Europe, through constantly recurring wars and the barbarism of the Middle Ages, succeeded in having four hundred ten inhabitants[3] per square league. What cause so powerful could prevent the United States from having as many one day?

Many centuries will pass before the various offshoots of the English race of America cease showing a common physiognomy. You cannot foresee the period when man will be able to establish permanent inequality of conditions in the New World.

So whatever differences are made one day in the destiny of the various offshoots of the great Anglo-American family by peace or war, liberty or tyranny, prosperity or poverty, they will all at least preserve an analogous social state and will have in common customs and ideas that derive from the social state.

The bond of religion alone was sufficient in the Middle Ages to bring the diverse races that peopled Europe together in the same civilization. The English of the New World have a thousand other bonds with each other, and they live in a century when everything is trying to become equal among men.

The Middle Ages was a period of division. Each people, each province, each city, each family then tended strongly to become more individual.[f] Today an opposite movement makes itself felt; peoples seem to march toward unity. Intellectual links unite the most distant parts of the earth, and men cannot remain strangers to one another for a single day, or ignorant of what is happening in no matter what corner of the universe. Conse-

2. *The United States alone already covers a space equal to half of Europe. The surface of Europe is 500,000 square leagues; its population 205,000,000 inhabitants. Malte-Brun, vol. VI, book CXIV, p. 4.*

3. *See Malte-Brun, vol. VI, book CXVI, p. 92.*

f. Tocqueville will for the first time use the term "individualism" in chapter II of the second part of the third volume.

quently you notice today less difference between Europeans and their descendants of the New World, despite the Ocean that divides them, than between certain cities of the XIIIth century that were separated only by a river.

If this movement of assimilation brings foreign peoples together, it is opposed with greater reason to the offshoots of the same people becoming strangers to each other.

So a time will come when you will be able to see in North America one hundred and fifty million[g] men[4] equal to one another, who will all belong to the same family, who will have the same point of departure, the same civilization, the same language, the same religion, the same habits, the same mores, and among whom thought will circulate with the same form and will be painted with the same colors. All the rest is doubtful, but this is certain. Now here is a fact entirely new in the world, and imagination itself cannot grasp its import.

Today there are two great peoples on earth who, starting from different points, seem to advance toward the same goal: these are the Russians and the Anglo-Americans.

Both grew up in obscurity; and while the attention of men was occupied elsewhere, they suddenly took their place in the first rank of nations, and the world learned of their birth and their greatness nearly at the same time.

All other peoples seem to have almost reached the limits drawn by nature, and have nothing more to do except maintain themselves; but these two are growing.[5] All the others have stopped or move ahead only with a thousand efforts; these two alone walk with an easy and rapid stride along a path whose limit cannot yet be seen.

The American struggles against obstacles that nature opposes to him; the Russian is grappling with men. The one combats the wilderness and bar-

g. The figure is missing in the manuscript.

4. *It is the population proportionate to that of Europe, by taking the average of 410 men per square league.*

5. *Russia is of all the nations of the Old World the one whose population is increasing most rapidly, keeping the proportion. [See Malte-Brun, vol. VI, p. 95.]*

barism; the other, civilization clothed in all its arms. Consequently the conquests of the American are made with the farmer's plow, those of the Russian with the soldier's sword.

To reach his goal the first relies on personal interest, and, without directing them, allows the strength and reason of individuals to operate.

The second in a way concentrates all the power of society in one man.

The one has as principal means of action liberty; the other, servitude.

Their point of departure is different, their paths are varied; nonetheless, each one of them seems called by a secret design of Providence to hold in its hands one day the destinies of half the world.[h]

h. This passage is one of the best known of the *Democracy,* and probably one of the most cited of the entire book. It gained Tocqueville a reputation as a prophet that has not failed to harm the overall interpretation of his work. If several critics have noted that a similar idea is found among authors as diverse as Edmund Dana, Alexander Hill Everett, the Abbé de Pradt, Madame de Staël, Edward Everett (in two reviews of Pradt), John Bristed, Stendhal, and Michel Chevalier, it must nonetheless be noted that the theories of Tocqueville sometimes differ perceptibly from those of these authors. M. de Pradt (*Du système permanent de l'Europe à l'égard de la Russie et des affaires de l'Orient,* Paris: Pichon and Didier, 1828), for example, does oppose two powers, but they are England as maritime force and Russia as land force. He only incidentally mentions that America could avenge Europe (p. 5). Alexander Everett (*America: Or a General Survey of the Political Situation of the Several Powers of the Western Continent* . . . , Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lee, 1827), for his part, conceives three great powers: Russia, England, and the United States.

You cannot understand why Tocqueville terminates his considerations with this affirmation if you forget that his interest in the United States is nearly equal to the one he had for Russia. This is clear not only in his correspondence with the Circourts, Greg, Madame Phillimore, Everett, or Corcelle, but also in long conversations that he was able to have with Theodore Sedgwick in 1834 or with Grandmaison twenty years later. The latter notes that in 1854, Tocqueville continued to think that the Slavic race and the Anglo-Saxon race would one day share the world. His interest in Russia had led him to read the work of Baron de Haxthausen (*Études sur la situation intérieure, la vie nationale et les institutions rurales de la Russie,* Hanover, 1847–1853, 3 vols.). Grandmaison reports that Tocqueville asserted: "a young and intelligent man, courageous enough to learn Russian and to spend some years in Russia, would find there the subject of a very curious study and of a book of high interest that would come to be a counterpart to his own work on America." And he adds: "This idea preoccupied him a great deal; you felt with him the regret of not being able to execute it, and I believe he would have willingly pushed me into this undertaking, if I had given him the slightest opening from my side" ("Séjour d'Alexis de Tocqueville en Touraine, préparation du livre sur l'Ancien Régime,"

Correspondant, 114, 1879, pp. 926–49; cf. p. 943). Beaumont, perhaps persuaded by the author, will do for the *Revue des deux mondes* a review of the book of Haxthausen ("La Russie et les Etats-Unis sous le rapport économique," *Revue des deux mondes,* 2nd series, 5, 1854, pp. 1163–83). See note y for p. 158. Also see on this subject: René Rémond, *Les États-Unis devant l'opinion française, 1815–1852,* Paris: Armand Colin, 1962, I, pp. 378–79 note; Theodore Draper, "The Idea of the 'Cold War' and Its Prophets. On Tocqueville and Others," *Encounter,* 52, 1979, pp. 34–45 (Draper insists on the fact that Tocqueville never considered a possible confrontation between the two countries); Bernard Fabian, Alexis de Tocqueville *Amerikabild: Genetische Untersuchungen über Zusammenhänge mit der Zeitgenössischen, Insbesondere der Englischen Amerika-Interpretation,* Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1957; and Philip Merlan, "A Precursor of Tocqueville," *Pacific Historical Review* 35, no. 4 (1966): 467–68.

Notes

First Part

(A) Page 36

See, concerning the lands of the west that Europeans have not yet penetrated, the two voyages undertaken by Major Long, at the expense of Congress.

Concerning the great American desert, Mr. Long says notably that a line must be drawn about parallel to the 20th degree of longitude (meridian of Washington),[1] beginning at the Red River and ending at the Platte River. Extending from this imaginary line to the Rocky Mountains, which border the Mississippi Valley in the west, are immense plains, generally covered with sand which is unsuitable for agriculture, or strewn with granite stones. They are deprived of water in the summer. There only great herds of buffalo and wild horses are found. Some Indian hordes are seen as well, but only a small number.

Major Long has heard it said that, ascending the Platte River, in the same direction, this same desert would always be found on the left; but he was not able personally to verify the accuracy of this report. *Long's Expedition,* vol. II, p. 361.

Whatever confidence Major Long's account merits, it must not be forgotten, however, that he only crossed the country that he is speaking about, without making any great zigzags outside the line that he followed.

1. *The 20th degree of longitude, following the meridian of Washington, is approximately the equivalent of the 99th degree following the meridian of Paris.*

(B) Page 38

South America, in the region between the tropics, produces an incredible profusion of climbing plants known by the generic name of creepers. The flora of the Antilles alone offers more than forty different species.

Among the most graceful of these bushes is the grenadilla. Descourtiz,[a] in his description of the plant kingdom of the Antilles, says that this lovely plant attaches itself to trees by means of its tendrils, and forms moving arcades and colonnades, made rich and elegant by the beauty of the crimson flowers, variegated with blue, that decorate them and that delight the sense of smell with the scent they give off; vol. I, p. 265.

The acacia with large pods is a very thick creeper that grows rapidly and, going from tree to tree, sometimes covers more than a half-league; vol. III, p. 227.

(C) Page 40
On the American Languages

The languages spoken by the Indians of America, from the Arctic Pole to Cape Horn, are all formed, it is said, on the same model, and subject to the same grammatical rules; from that it can be concluded that, in all likelihood, all the Indian nations came from the same stock.

Each tribal band of the American continent speaks a different dialect; but the languages strictly speaking are very few in number, which would tend as well to prove that the nations of the New World do not have a very ancient origin.

Finally the languages of America are extremely regular, so it is probable that the peoples who use them have not yet been subjected to great revolutions and have not mixed with foreign nations by necessity or voluntarily;

a. M. E. Descourtiz, *Voyages d'un naturaliste et ses observations,* Dufart Père, 1809, 3 vols.

for it is in general the union of several languages into a single one that produces irregularities of grammar.

Not long ago the American languages, and in particular, the languages of North America, attracted the serious attention of philologists. It was discovered then, for the first time, that this idiom of a barbarous people was the product of a system of very complicated ideas and of very clever combinations. It was noticed that these languages were very rich and that, when forming them, great care had been taken to show consideration for the sensitivity of the ear.

The grammatical system of the Americans differs from all others on several points, but principally in this one.

Some peoples of Europe, among others the Germans, have the ability to combine different expressions as needed, and thus to give a complex meaning to certain words. The Indians have extended this ability in the most surprising way, and have succeeded in fixing so to speak at a single point a very large number of ideas. This will be easily understood with the help of an example cited by Mr. Duponceau, in the *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society.*

When, he says, a Delaware woman plays with a cat or with a dog, you sometimes hear her pronounce the word *kuligatschis.* The word is composed in this way: *K* is the sign of the second person and means you or your; *uli,* which is pronounced *ouli,* is a fragment of the word *wulit,* which means *beautiful, pretty; gat* is another fragment of the word *wichgat,* which means *paw;* finally *schis,* which is pronounced *chise,* is the diminutive ending which carries with it the idea of smallness. Thus, in a single word, the Indian woman has said: Your pretty little paw.

Here is another example that shows with what felicity the savages of America know how to compose their words.

A young man in the Delaware language is called *pilapé.* This word is formed from *pilsit,* chaste, innocent; and from *lénapé,* man: that is to say man in his purity and his innocence.

This ability to combine words is noticeable above all in a very strange way of forming verbs. The most complicated action is often rendered by a single verb; nearly all the nuances of the idea bear upon the verb and modify it.

Those who would like to examine in more detail this subject that I myself have only touched on very superficially, should read:

1. The Correspondence of Mr. Duponceau with the Reverend Hecwelder [Heckewelder (ed.)], relating to the Indian languages. This correspondence is found in the first volume of the *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society,* published in Philadelphia, in 1819, Abraham Small, pp. 356–464.

2. The grammar of the Delaware or Lenape language by Geiberger,[b] and the preface of Mr. Duponceau, which is added. The whole thing is found in the same collections, vol. III.

3. A very well done summary of these works, contained at the end of volume VI of the *Encyclopedia Americana.*

(D) Page 42

We find in Charlevoix, volume I, p. 235, the history of the first war that the French of Canada had to sustain, in 1610, against the Iroquois. The latter, although armed with bows and arrows, offered a desperate resistance to the French and their allies. Charlevoix, who is not good at doing portraits, shows very well in this piece the contrast that the mores of the Europeans presented to those of the savages, as well as the different ways in which these two races understood honor.

"The French," he says, "grabbed the beaver skins that covered the Iroquois, whom they saw spread out over the ground; the Hurons, their allies, were scandalized by this spectacle. The latter, on their side, began to exercise their ordinary cruelties on the prisoners, and devoured one of those who had been killed, which horrified the French. "Thus," adds Charlevoix, "these barbarians gloried in a disinterestedness that they were surprised not to find in our nation, and did not understand that there was much less evil in stripping the dead than in eating their flesh like wild beasts."

b. David Zeisberger, "A Grammar of the Language of the Lenni Lanâpé," translated by P. S. Duponceau, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society,* III, 1827, pp. 65–250.

The same Charlevoix, in another place, vol. I, p. 230 [–231 (ed.)], depicts in this way the first torture that Champlain witnessed, and the return of the Hurons to their village.

"After having done eight leagues," he says, "our allies stopped, and, taking one of their captives, they reproached him for all the cruelties that he had exercised on the warriors of their nation who had fallen into his hands, and they declared to him that he must expect to be treated in the same manner, adding that, if he had courage, he would display it by singing. He soon started to sing his song [of death, then his song (ed.)] of war, and all those that he knew, but with a very sad tone, says Champlain, who had not yet had the time to know that all of the music of the savages is somewhat lugubrious. His torture, accompanied by all the horrors that we will speak of later, frightened the French who in vain did their utmost to put an end to it.[c] The following night, because a Huron dreamed that they were being pursued, the retreat changed into a veritable flight, and the savages did not stop anywhere again until they were out of any danger.

"From the moment that they saw the huts of their village, they cut long sticks to which they attached their share of the scalps and carried them triumphantly. At this sight the women ran, jumped in swimming, and, reaching the canoes took these bloody scalps from the hands of their husbands, and hung them around their necks.

"These warriors offered one of these horrible trophies to Champlain, and also made him a present of some bows and some arrows, the only spoils of the Iroquois that they had wanted to take, begging him to show them to the king of France."

Champlain lived alone all one winter amid these barbarians, without his person or his property being compromised for one instant.

(E) Page 64

Although the Puritan rigor that prevailed at the birth of the English colonies of America has already become much weaker, you still find extraordinary traces of it in the habits and in the laws.

c. Tocqueville omits here the details of the dismemberment and death of the Indian.

In 1792, at the very period when the anti-Christian republic of France began its ephemeral existence, the legislative body of Massachusetts promulgated the law that you are about to read, in order to force citizens to observe Sunday. Here are the preamble and the principal provisions of this law, which deserves to attract all the reader's attention:

> Whereas, says the legislator, Sunday observance is in the public interest; that it produces a useful suspension of work; that it leads men to reflect upon the duties of life and the errors to which humanity is so prone; that it allows us in private and in public to honor God, creator and governor of the universe, and allows us to devote ourselves to those acts of charity that are the adornment and the relief of Christian societies;
>
> Whereas some irreligious or thoughtless persons, forgetting the duties imposed by Sunday and the benefits that society gains from them, profane the Holy Day in pursuit of their pleasures or their work; that this behavior is contrary to their own interests as Christians; that, in addition, it is of a nature to disturb those who do not follow their example, and brings real harm to the entire society by introducing the taste for dissipation and dissolute habits;
>
> The Senate and the House of Representatives order the following:
>
> 1. No one will be able, on Sunday, to keep his shop or workshop open. No one will be able, on that day, to be active in any work or business whatsoever, attend any concert, ball or show of any sort, nor pursue any kind of hunt, game, recreation, under penalty of a fine. The fine will not be less than 10 shillings, and will not exceed 20 shillings for each offense.
>
> 2. No traveler, driver, carter, except in case of necessity, will be able to travel on Sunday, under penalty of the same fine.
>
> 3. Hotelkeepers, retailers, innkeepers, will prevent any person living in their town from visiting them on Sunday, in order to pass the time in pleasure or business. In case of offense, the innkeeper and his guest will pay the fine. Moreover, the innkeeper will lose his license.
>
> 4. Whoever, being in good health and without having a sufficient reason, fails for three months to attend public worship will be condemned to a 10 shilling fine.
>
> 5. Whoever, within the confines of a church, displays inappropriate behavior will pay a fine of 5 to 40 shillings.

6. The tythingmen of the towns[2] are charged with responsibility for enforcing this law. They have the right to visit on Sunday all the rooms of hotels or public places. The innkeeper who refuses their entry into his establishment will be condemned for this fact alone to a fine of 40 shillings.

The tythingmen must stop travelers and inquire after the reason that has forced them to be on the road on Sunday. Whoever refuses to answer will be condemned to a fine that could be 5 pounds sterling.

If the reason given by the traveler does not seem sufficient to the tythingman, he will bring the said traveler before the justice of the peace of the district (*Law of 8 March 1792. General Laws of Massachusetts,* vol. I, p. 410).

On 11 March 1797, a new law increased the level of fines, half of which was to belong to the one who brought proceedings against the offender. *Same collection,* vol. I, p. 535.

On 16 February, 1816, a new law confirmed these same measures. *Same collection,* vol. II, p. 405.

Analogous provisions exist in the laws of the state of New York, revised in 1827 and 1828. (See *Revised Statutes,* 1st part, ch. XX, p. 675). It is said there that on Sunday no one will be able to hunt, fish, gamble or frequent establishments where drink is served. No one will be able to travel, if it is not out of necessity.

This is not the only trace left in the laws by the religious spirit and the austere mores of the first emigrants.

You read in the revised statutes of the state of New York, vol. I, p. 662 [–663 (ed.)], the following article:

Every person who shall win or lose at play, or by betting at any time, the sum or value of twenty-five dollars or upwards, within the space of twenty-four hours, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction shall be fined not less than five times the value or sum so lost or won; which [. . . (ed.) . . .] shall be paid to the overseers of the poor of the town. [. . . (ed.) . . .]

2. *These are officials elected each year who, by their functions, are at the very same time close to the rural guard and to the officer of the criminal investigation department.*

> Every person who shall [. . . (ed.) . . .] lose at any time or sitting the sum or value of twenty-five dollars or upwards[. . . (Ed) . . .] may [. . . (ed.) . . .] sue for and recover the money. [. . . (ed.) . . .] The overseers of the poor of the town where the offense was committed may sue for and recover the sum or value so lost and paid, together with treble the said sum or value, from the winner thereof for the benefit of the poor.

The laws that we have just cited are very recent; but who could comprehend them without going back to the very origin of the colonies? I do not doubt that today the penal portion of this legislation is only very rarely applied; the laws retain their inflexibility when the mores have already bent before the movement of the times. Sunday observance in America, however, is still what most strikes the foreigner.[d]

There is notably a large American city in which, beginning Saturday evening, social movement is as if suspended. You cross it at the hour that seems to invite those of mature years to business and youth to pleasure, and you find yourself in a profound solitude. Not only is no one working, but also no one appears to be alive. You hear neither the movement of industry nor the accents of joy, nor even the confused murmurings that arise constantly within a large city. Chains are hung in the vicinity of the churches; the half-closed shutters of the houses only reluctantly allow a ray of sunlight to penetrate the dwelling of the citizens. Scarcely here and there do you see an isolated man who is passing noiselessly through deserted crossroads and along abandoned streets.

The next morning at the beginning of day, the rattle of carriages, the noise of hammers, the cries of the population begin again to make themselves heard; the city awakens; a restless crowd rushes toward the centers of commerce and industry; everyone stirs, everyone becomes agitated, everyone hurries around you. A sort of lethargic drowsiness is followed by a feverish activity; you would say that each person has only a single day at his disposal in order to gain wealth and to enjoy it.

d. See the appendix SECTS IN AMERICA.

(F) Page 70

It is needless to say that, in the chapter that you have just read, I did not intend to do a history of America. My only goal was to enable the reader to appreciate the influence that the opinions and mores of the first emigrants exercised on the fate of the different colonies and on that of the Union in general. So I had to limit myself to citing a few unconnected fragments.

I do not know if I am wrong, but it seems to me that by following the path that I am only pointing out here, someone could present some portraits of the first years of the American republic that would be worthy of the attention of the public, and that would undoubtedly provide material for statesmen to consider. Not able to devote myself to this work, I wanted at least to facilitate it for others. So I believed that I should present here a short list and an abridged analysis of the works that seemed to me most useful to draw upon.

In the number of general documents that could fruitfully be consulted, I will place first the work entitled: *Historical Collection of State Papers and other authentic documents, intended as materials for an history of the United States of America,* by Ebenezer Hazard.

The first volume of this compilation, which was printed in Philadelphia in 1792, contains the exact text of all the charters granted by the crown of England to the emigrants, as well as the principal acts of the colonial governments during the first years of their existence. You find there, among others, a great number of authentic documents on the affairs of New England and Virginia during this period.

The second volume is dedicated almost entirely to the acts of the confederation of 1643. This federal pact, which took place among the colonies of New England, with the goal of resisting the Indians, was the first example of union given by the Anglo-Americans. There were also several other confederations of the same nature, until that of 1776, which led to the independence of the colonies.

The historical collection of Philadelphia is found in the Royal Library.

Each colony has as well its historical memorials, several of which are

very precious. I begin my study with Virginia, which is the state populated earliest.

The first of all the historians of Virginia is its founder Captain John Smith. Captain Smith left us a volume in quarto, entitled: *The General History of Virginia and New-England, by Captain John Smith, some time governor in those countryes and admiral of New-England,* printed in London in 1627. (This volume is found at the Royal Library.) The work of Smith is embellished with very interesting maps and plates, which date from the time when it was printed. The account of the historian extends from the year 1584 to 1626. Smith's book is esteemed and deserves to be so. The author is one of the most famous adventurers who appeared in the century full of adventurers; he lived at the end of that century. The book itself breathes this fervor of discoveries, this spirit of enterprise that characterized the men of that time; there you find those chivalrous mores that were mixed with business and were made to serve the acquisition of wealth.

But what is remarkable above all in Captain Smith is that he mixed, with the virtues of his contemporaries, qualities that remained foreign to most of them; his style is simple and clear, all of his accounts have the stamp of truth, his descriptions are not ornate.

This author throws precious light on the state of the Indians at the period of the discovery of North America.

The second historian to consult is Beverley. The work of Beverley, which forms a volume in duodecimo, was translated into French and printed in Amsterdam in 1707. The author begins his accounts in the year 1585 and ends them in the year 1700. The first part of his book contains historical documents, properly so called, relative to the early years of the colony. The second contains a curious portrait of the state of the Indians at that distant period. The third gives very clear ideas about the mores, social state, laws and political habits of the Virginians at the time of the author.

Beverly was of Virginian origin, which made him say at the beginning "that he begs readers not to examine his work with too strict a critical eye, seeing that since he was born in the Indies, he does not aspire to purity of language." Despite this modesty of the colonist, the author shows throughout his book that he bears the supremacy of the mother country with impatience. You find as well in the work of Beverley numerous traces of this

spirit of civil liberty that has, since that time, animated the English colonies of America. You also find the trace of the divisions that have existed for such a long time among them, and that delayed their independence. Beverley detests his Catholic neighbors of Maryland still more than the English government. The style of this author is simple; his accounts are often full of interest and inspire confidence. The French translation of Beverley's history is found in the Royal Library.

I saw in America, but I was not able to find again in France, a work that also merits consultation; it is entitled: *History of Virginia,* by William Stith. This book offers interesting details, but it seemed long and diffuse to me.

The oldest and best document that you can consult on the history of the Carolinas is a small book in quarto, entitled: *The History of Carolina,* by John Lawson, printed in London in 1718.

The work of Lawson contains first a voyage of discovery in the west of Carolina. This voyage is written as a journal; the accounts of the author are confused; his observations are very superficial; you only find a quite striking portrait of the ravages caused by smallpox and brandy among the savages of this period, and an interesting portrait of the corruption of mores that reigned among them, and that the presence of the Europeans favored.

The second part of the work of Lawson is dedicated to retracing the physical state of Carolina and to making its products known.

In the third part, the author does an interesting description of the mores, customs and government of the Indians of this period.

There is often spirit and originality in this portion of the book.

The history by Lawson ends with the charter granted to Carolina at the time of Charles II.

The general tone of this work is light, often licentious, and forms a perfect contrast with the profoundly grave style of the works published at this same time in New England.

The history by Lawson is an extremely rare document in America that cannot be obtained in Europe. There is, however, a copy of it in the Royal Library.

From the southern extremity of the United States, I pass immediately to the northern extremity. The intermediate space was populated only later.

I must first point out a very curious compilation entitled: *Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society,* printed for the first time in Boston in 1792, reprinted in 1806. This work is not in the Royal Library, nor, I believe, in any other.

The collection (which continues) contains a host of very precious documents relating to the history of the different states of New England. There you find unpublished correspondence and authentic pieces that were hidden away in the provincial archives. The complete work of Gookin relating to the Indians has been inserted there.

Several times, in the course of the chapter to which this note belongs, I pointed out the work of Nathaniel Morton entitled: *New England's Memorial.* What I said about this work is enough to prove that it is worthy to draw the attention of those who would like to know the history of New England. The book by Nathaniel Morton forms a volume in octavo, reprinted in Boston in 1826. It is not in the Royal Library.

The most respected and most important document that we possess on the history of New England is the work of the Reverend Cotton Mather, entitled: *Magnalia Christi Americana, or the ecclesiastical history of New England,* 1620–1698, 2 vol. in octavo, reprinted in Hartford in 1820. I do not believe that it is found in the Royal Library.

The author divided his work into seven books.

The first presents the history of what prepared and led to the founding of New England.

The second contains the life of the first governors and principal magistrates who administered this country.

The third is consecrated to the life and works of the evangelical ministers who, during this same period, led souls there.

In the fourth, the author describes the founding and development of the university of Cambridge (Massachusetts).

In the fifth, he explains the principles and discipline of the Church of New England.

The sixth is consecrated to retracing certain facts that denote, according to Mather, the salutary action of Providence on the inhabitants of New England.

In the seventh, finally, the author teaches us the heresies and troubles to which the Church of New England has been exposed.

Cotton Mather was an evangelical minister who, born in Boston, spent his life there.

All the ardor and all the religious passions that led to the founding of New England animate and give life to his accounts. You frequently find traces of bad taste in his way of writing; but he captivates, because he is full of enthusiasm that ends by communicating itself to the reader. He is often intolerant, more often gullible; but you never see in him the desire to deceive; sometimes his work even presents beautiful passages and true and profound ideas such as these:

> Before the arrival of the Puritans, he says, vol. I, ch. IV, p. 61, the English had tried several times to settle the country that we live in; but since they did not aim higher than the success of their material interests, they were soon defeated by obstacles; this wasn't the case with the men who arrived in America, pushed and sustained by a noble religious idea. Although the latter found more enemies than perhaps the founders of any other colony ever had, they persisted in their plan, and the settlement that they established still exists today.

Mather sometimes mixes, with the austerity of these portraits, images full of sweetness and tenderness. After speaking about an English lady whose religious fervor had brought her to America with her husband, and who soon succumbed to the hardships and miseries of exile, he adds:

"As for her virtuous spouse, Isaac Johnson, Esq., He try'd to live without her, lik'd it not, and dy'd" (V. I, p. 71.)

Mather's book admirably reveals the time and country that he is trying to describe.

If he wants to teach us what motives led the Puritans to seek a refuge beyond the seas, he says:

> The God of Heaven served as it were, a summons upon the spirits of his people in the English nation; stirring up the spirits of thousands which never saw the faces of each other, with a most unanimous inclination to leave all the pleasant accommodations of their native country; and go over

a terrible ocean, into a more terrible desart [*sic*], for the pure enjoyment of all his ordinances.

It is now reasonable that before we pass any further [he adds] the reasons of this undertaking should be more exactly made known unto the posterity of those that were the undertakers, lest they come at length to forget and neglect the true interest of New-England. Wherefore I shall now transcribe some of them from a manuscript, wherein they were then tendered unto consideration.

[. . . (ed.) . . .]

First, It will be a service unto the Church of great consequence, to carry the Gospel into those parts of the world, and raise a bulwark against the kingdom of antichrist, which the Jesuites [*sic*] labour to rear up in all parts of the world.

Secondly, All other Churches of Europe have been brought under desolations; and it may be feared that the like judgments are coming upon us; and who knows but God hath provided this place to be a refuge for many, whom he means to save out of the General Destruction.

Thirdly, The land grows weary of her inhabitants, insomuch that man, which is the most precious of all creatures, is here more vile and base than the earth he treads upon: children, neighbors, and friends, especially the poor, are counted the greatest burdens, which if things were right would be the chiefest earthly blessings.

Fourthly, We are grown to that intemperance in all excess of riot, as no mean estate almost will suffice a man to keep sail with his equals, and he that fails in it, must live in scorn and contempt: hence it comes to pass, that all arts and trades are carried in that deceitful manner, and unrighteous course, as it is almost impossible for a good upright man to maintain his constant charge, and live comfortably in them.

Fifthly, The schools of learning and religion are so corrupted, as [. . . (ed.) . . .] most children, even the best, wittiest, and of the fairest hopes, are perverted, corrupted, and utterly overthrown, by the multitude of evil examples and licentious behaviours in these seminaries.

> Sixthly, The whole earth is the Lord's garden, and he hath given it to the sons of Adam, to be tilled and improved by them: why then should we stand starving here for places of habitation and in the mean time suffer whole countries, as profitable for the use of man, to lye [*sic*] waste without any improvement?
>
> Seventhly, What can be a better or nobler work, and more worthy of a christian, than to erect and support a reformed particular Church in its infancy, and unite our forces with such a company of faithful people, as by a timely assistance may grow stronger and prosper; but for want of it, may be put to great hazard, if not be wholly ruined.
>
> Eighthly, If any such as are known to be godly, and live in wealth and prosperity here, shall forsake all this to join with this reformed church, and with it run the hazard of an hard and mean condition, it will be an example of great use, both for the removing of scandal and to give more life unto the faith of God's people in their prayers for the plantation, and also to encourage others to join the more willingly in it.

Later, explaining the principles of the Church of New England on moral matters, Mather rises up violently against the custom of drinking toasts at dinner, which he calls a pagan and abominable habit.

He proscribes with the same rigor all ornaments that women can put in their hair, and condemns without pity the fashion of showing the neck and arms that, he says, is becoming established among them.

In another part of the work, he recounts at great length several instances of witchcraft that frightened New England. You see that the visible action of the devil in the affairs of this world seems to him an incontestable and proven truth.

In a great number of places in this same book a spirit of civil liberty and political independence is revealed that characterized the contemporaries of the author. Their principles in matters of government appear at each step. Thus, for example, you see the inhabitants of Massachusetts, from the year 1630 [1636 (ed.)], ten years after the founding of Plymouth, devote 400 pounds sterling to the establishment of the university of Cambridge.

If I pass from general documents relating to the history of New England

to those that relate to the various states included in its limits, I will first have to point out the work entitled: *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts, by Hutchinson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Massachusetts province,* 2 vols. in octavo. A copy of this book is found in the Royal Library; it is a second edition printed in London in 1765.

The history of Hutchinson, which I cited several times in the chapter to which this note relates, begins in the year 1628 and finishes in 1750. A great air of truthfulness reigns in the whole book; the style is simple and unaffected. This history is very detailed.

The best document to consult, for Connecticut, is the history of Benjamin Trumbull, entitled: *A Complete History of Connecticut, Civil and Ecclesiastical, 1630–1764,* 2 vols. in octavo, printed in 1818 at New Haven. I do not believe that Trumbull's work is found in the Royal Library.

This history contains a clear and cold exposition of all the events that took place in Connecticut during the period indicated by the title. The author drew upon the best sources, and his accounts retain the stamp of truth. All that he says about the early years of Connecticut is extremely interesting. See notably in his work the Constitution of 1639, vol. I, ch. VI, p. 100 [–103 (ed.)]; and also the Penal Laws of Connecticut, vol. I, ch. VII, p. 123.

The work of Jeremy Belknap entitled: *History of New Hampshire,* 2 vols. in octavo, printed in Boston in 1792, is rightly well regarded. See particularly, in Belknap's work, ch. III of the first volume. In this chapter, the author gives extremely valuable details about the political and religious principles of the Puritans, about the causes of their emigration, and about their laws. There you find this interesting quotation from a sermon delivered in 1663:

> New England must constantly recall that it was founded for a religious purpose and not for a commercial purpose. It is written on its forehead that it professed purity in matters of doctrine and discipline. May merchants and all those who are busy piling up money remember, therefore, that it is religion, and not gain, that was the object of the founding of these colonies. If there is someone among us who, in his estimation of the world and of religion, looks upon the first as 13 and takes the second

only as 12, he is not prompted by the sentiments of a true son of New England.

Readers will find in Belknap more general ideas and more power of thought than that presented until now by the other American historians.

I do not know if this book is found in the Royal Library.

Among the states of the center that are already old, and that merit our interest, the states of New York and Pennsylvania stand out above all. The best history that we have of the state of New York is entitled: *History of New York,* by William Smith, printed in London in 1757. A French translation exists, also printed in London in 1757, 1 vol. in duodecimo. Smith provides us with useful details on the wars of the French and English in America. He is, of all the American historians, the one who best shows the famous confederation of the Iroquois.

As for Pennsylvania, I cannot do better than to point to the work of Proud entitled: *The History of Pennsylvania, From the Original Institution and Settlement of That Province, under the First Proprietor and Governor William Penn, in 1681 till after the Year 1742,* by Robert Proud, 2 vols. in octavo, printed in Philadelphia in 1797.

This work particularly deserves the attention of the reader; it contains a host of very interesting documents on Penn, the doctrine of the Quakers, the character, mores, customs of the first inhabitants of Pennsylvania. As far as I know, it is not in the Royal Library.

I do not need to add that among the most important documents relative to Pennsylvania are the works of Penn himself and those of Franklin. These works are known by a great number of readers.

Most of the books that I have just cited had already been consulted by me during my stay in America. The Royal Library has kindly entrusted me with some of them; others have been loaned to me by Mr. Warden, former consul general of the United States to Paris, author of an excellent book on America. I do not want to conclude this note without extending to Mr. Warden the expression of my gratitude.

(G) Page 84

You find what follows in the *Mémoires de Jefferson:*

> In the first years of the English settlement in Virginia, when land was obtained for little, or even for nothing, several far-seeing individuals acquired great land concessions, and desiring to maintain the splendor of their families, they entailed their wealth to their descendants. The transmission of these properties from generation to generation, to men who carried the same name, had finally produced a distinct class of families that, with the legal privilege of perpetuating their wealth, thus formed a kind of patrician order distinguished by the grandeur and the luxury of their holdings. It was from among this group that the king usually chose the members of his council (*Jefferson's Memoirs*).

In the United States, the principal provisions of English law relating to inheritance were universally rejected.

> The first rule of inheritance is, says Mr. Kent, that if a person owning real estate, dies seized, or as owner, without devising the same, the estate shall descend to his lawful descendants in the direct line of lineal descent; and if there be but one person, then to him or her alone, and if more than one person, and all of equal degree of consanguinity to the ancestor, then the inheritance shall descend to the several persons as tenants in common in equal parts [. . . (ed.) . . .] without distinction of sex.

This rule was prescribed for the first time in the state of New York by a statute of 23 February 1786 (see *Revised Statutes,* vol. III; *Appendix,* p. 48); it has been adopted since in the revised statutes of the same state. It prevails now throughout the United States, the sole exception being that, in the state of Vermont, the male heir has a double share. *Kent's Commentaries,* vol. IV, p. 370.

Mr. Kent, in the same work, vol. IV, pp. 1–22, reviews American legislation relative to *entail.* The outcome is that before the American Revolution the English laws on *entail* formed the common law in the colonies. Entail strictly speaking (*Estates' tail*) was abolished in Virginia in 1776 (this abolition took place on the motion of Jefferson; see *Jefferson's Memoirs*), in the state of New York in 1786. The same abolition has taken place since

in North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Missouri. In Vermont, the states of Indiana, Illinois, South Carolina and Louisiana, entail has always been unusual. The states that believed they had to keep English legislation relative to entail modified it in a way to remove its principal aristocratic characteristics. "Our general principles in matters of government," says Mr. Kent, "tend to favor the free circulation of property."[e]

What singularly strikes the French reader who studies American legislation relative to inheritance is that our laws on the same matter are still infinitely more democratic than theirs.

American laws divide the wealth of the father equally, but only in the case where his will is not known: "for every man, says the law, in the State of New York (*Revised Statutes,* vol. III; *Appendix,* p. 51), has full liberty, power and authority, to dispose of his goods by a will, to bequeath, divide, in favor of whatever person it may be, provided that he does not make out his will in favor of a political body or an organized company."

French law makes equal or nearly equal division the rule of the testator.

Most of the American republics still allow entail and limit themselves to restricting the effects.

French law allows entail in no case.[f]

If the social state of Americans is still more democratic than ours, our laws are thus more democratic than theirs. This is explained better than you think: in France democracy is still busy demolishing; in America it reigns tranquilly over the ruins.

e. The quoted text reads: "The general policy of this country does not encourage restraints upon the power of alienation of land." *Kent's Commentaries,* volume IV, p. 17.

f. Hervé de Tocqueville: "I read that with surprise. The law authorizes the father testator to favor one of his children. In collateral line it leaves a very much greater latitude" (YTC, CIIIb, 2, p. 99).

(H) Page 97
Summary of Electoral Conditions in the United States

All the states grant the enjoyment of electoral rights at age twenty-one. In all the states, you have to have resided a certain time in the district where you vote. This time varies from three months to two years.

As for the property qualification: in the state of Massachusetts, to be a voter, you have to have 3 pounds sterling of income, or 60 of capital.

In Rhode Island, you have to own property valued at 133 dollars (704 francs).

In Connecticut, you have to have a property with an income of 17 dollars (about 90 francs). A year of service in the militia gives the right to vote as well.

In New Jersey, the voter must have wealth of 50 pounds sterling.

In South Carolina and Maryland, the voter must own 50 acres of land.

In Tennessee, you must own some property.

In the states of Mississippi, Ohio, Georgia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York, it is sufficient, to be a voter, to pay taxes: in most of these states, service in the militia is the equivalent of paying taxes.

In Maine and in New Hampshire, it is sufficient not to be included on the list of the poor.

Finally in the states of Missouri, Alabama, Illinois, Louisiana, Indiana, Kentucky, Vermont, no condition is required having to do with the wealth of the voter.

Only North Carolina, I think, imposes on the voter for the Senate conditions other than those imposed on voters for the House of Representatives. The first must own property of 50 acres of land. It is sufficient, in order to be able to elect representatives, to pay a tax.

(I) Page 161

A prohibitive system exists in the United States. The small number of customs officials and the great extent of coastline make smuggling very easy;

it is done infinitely less there than elsewhere, however, because each person works to repress it.

Since there is no preventive surveillance in the United States, you see more fires there than in Europe; but in general they are extinguished sooner, because the surrounding population does not fail to go quickly to the place of danger.

(K) Page 165

It is not correct to say that centralization was born out of the French Revolution; the French Revolution perfected it, but did not create it. The taste for centralization and the mania for regulation go back in France to the period when the jurists entered into the government; which takes us back to the time of Philippe le Bel [the Fair]. Since that time, these two things have never ceased to increase. Here is what M. de Malesherbes, speaking in the name of the *Cour des aides,* said to King Louis XVI in 1775:[3]

> There remained to each body, to each community of citizens the right to administer its own affairs; a right that we do not say was part of the original constitution of the kingdom, for it goes back much further: it is natural law, it is the law of reason. But it has been taken away from your subjects, Sire, and we will not be afraid to say that the administration has fallen in this respect into excesses that can be called childish.
>
> Since powerful ministers made it a political principle not to allow the national assembly to be convoked, we have gone step by step to the point of declaring null and void deliberations of the inhabitants of a village when they are not authorized by an *intendant;* so that, if this community has an expenditure to make, the assent of the subdelegate of the *intendant* must be gained, consequently the plan that he adopted must be followed, the workers that he favors must be used, they must be paid as he sees fit; and if the community has a court case to sustain, it must also be authorized to do so by the *intendant;* the case must be argued before this first tribunal before being brought before the courts. And if the opinion of the *inten-*

3. *See* Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du droit public de la France en matière d'impôts, *p. 654, printed in Brussels in 1779.*

> *dant* is against the inhabitants, or if their adversary has the ear of the *intendant,* the community is deprived of the ability to defend its rights. Here, Sire, are the means by which some have worked to smother in France all municipal spirit, to extinguish, if it could be done, even the sentiments of citizens; the entire nation has been so to speak *prohibited* and it has been given guardians.[g]

What could you say better today, now that the French Revolution has made what are called its *conquests* in the matter of centralization?

In 1789, Jefferson wrote from Paris to one of his friends: "Never was there a country where the mania for governing too much had taken deeper roots and done more mischief than in France." Letter to Madison, 28 August 1789.

The truth is that in France, for several centuries, the central power has always done all that it could to extend administrative centralization; in this course it has never had any other limit than its strength.

The central power born from the French Revolution went further in this than any of its predecessors, because it was stronger and more clever than any of them. Louis XIV submitted the details of communal existence to the wishes of the *intendant;* Napoleon submitted them to those of the minister. It is always the same principle, extended to consequences more or less remote.

(L) Page 170

This immutability of the constitution in France is a necessary consequence of our laws.

And, to speak first about the most important of all the laws, that which regulates the order of succession to the throne, what is more immutable in its principle than a political order based on the natural order of succession

g. Count de Boissy d'Anglas, *Essais sur la vie, les écrits et les opinions de M. de Malesherbes* (Paris: Treuttel and Würtz, 1819), I, pp. 305–6 (quoted in YTC, CVh, 5, p. 3). We know that this idea that the process of centralization predates the Revolution is the principal thesis of the *Old Regime and the Revolution.*

Also see Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Alianza Universidad, 1989), pp. 137–80.

from father to son? In 1814, Louis XVIII had this perpetuity of the law of political succession acknowledged in favor of his family. Those who settled the results of the revolution of 1830 followed his example; only they established the perpetuity of the law to the profit of another family; in this they imitated chancellor Maupeou, who, while instituting the new *parlement* on the ruins of the old, took care to declare in the same ordinance that the new magistrates would be irremovable as their predecessors were.

The laws of 1830 do not, any more than those of 1814, indicate any means to change the constitution. Now, it is clear that the ordinary means of legislation cannot be sufficient for that.

From what does the king derive his powers? From the constitution. From what the peers? From the constitution. From what the deputies? From the constitution. How then would the king, the peers and the deputies be able, by uniting, to change something in a law by the sole virtue of which they govern? Outside the constitution they are nothing; so on what ground would they stand in order to change the constitution? One of two things: either their efforts are powerless against the charter, which continues to exist in spite of them, and then they continue to rule in its name; or they succeed in changing the charter, and then, since the law by which they exist no longer exists, they are no longer anything themselves. By destroying the charter, they are destroyed.

That is still much more obvious in the laws of 1830 than in those of 1814. In 1814, the royal power put itself, in a way, outside and above the constitution; but in 1830, by its own admission, it is created by the constitution and is absolutely nothing without it.

Thus a part of our constitution is immutable, because it has been joined with the destiny of a family; and the whole of the constitution is equally immutable, because no legal means are seen to change it.

All this is not applicable to England. Since England has no written constitution, who can say that its constitution is being changed?

(M) Page 171

The most respected authors who have written about the English constitution establish, as though trying to out do each other, this omnipotence of Parliament.

Delolme says [book I (ed.)], ch. x, p. 77: *It is a fundamental principle with the English lawyers, that parliament can do everything, except making a woman a man or a man a woman.*

Blackstone expresses himself still more categorically, if not more energetically, than Delolme; in these terms [book V, ch. II]:

> "The power and jurisdiction of Parliament," says sir Edward Coke (4 Inst. 36), "is so transcendent and absolute, that it cannot be confined, either for causes or persons, within any bounds. And of this high court," he adds, "it may be truly said, *Si antiquitatem spectes, est vetustissima; si dignitatem, est honoratissima; si jurisdictionem, est capacissima.* It hath sovereign and uncontrollable authority in making, confirming, enlarging, restraining, abrogating, repealing, reviving, and expounding of laws concerning matters of all possible denominations, ecclesiastical, or temporal, civil, military, maritime, or criminal: this being the place where that absolute despotice [*sic*] power, which must in all governments reside somewhere, is entrusted by the constitution of these kingdoms. All mischief and grievances, operations and remedies, that transcend the ordinary course of laws are within the reach of this extraordinary tribunal. It can regulate or new model the succession to the crown; as was done in the reign of Henry VIII and William III. It can alter the established religion of the land; as was done in a variety of instances, in the reigns of king Henry VIII. and his three children. It can *change and create afresh even the constitution of the kingdom* and of parliaments themselves; as was done by the act of union and the several statutes for triennial and septennial elections. It can, in short, do everything that is not naturally impossible; and therefore some have not scrupled to call it's [*sic*] power, by a figure rather too bold, the *omnipotence* of parliament."

(N) Page 185

There is no subject on which the American constitutions agree more than on political jurisdiction.

All the constitutions that deal with this subject give the house of representatives the exclusive right to accuse, except only the Constitution of North Carolina, which grants the same right to the grand juries (article 23).

Nearly all the constitutions give to the senate, or to the assembly that takes its place, the exclusive right to judge.

The only penalties that the political courts can pronounce are: dismissal or banning from public offices in the future. Only the Constitution of Virginia allows pronouncing all types of penalties.

Crimes that can lead to political jurisdiction are: in the federal Constitution (sect. IV, art. I) [Article II, Section 4 (ed.)], in that of Indiana (art. 3, pp. 23 and 24), of New York (art. 5), of Delaware (art. 5), high treason, corruption and other high crimes or misdemeanors;

In the Constitution of Massachusetts (ch. I, sect. II), of North Carolina (art. 23), and of Virginia (p. 252), bad conduct and bad administration;

In the Constitution of New Hampshire (p. 105), corruption, reprehensible schemes, and bad administration;

In Vermont (ch. II, art. 24), bad administration;

In South Carolina (art. 5), Kentucky (art. 5), Tennessee (art. 4), Ohio (art. 1, #23, 24), Louisiana (art. 5), Mississippi (art. 5), Alabama (art. 6), Pennsylvania (art. 4), crimes committed in office.

In the states of Illinois, Georgia, Maine and Connecticut, no crime is specified.

(O) Page 276

It is true that the powers of Europe can wage great maritime wars against the Union; but it is always easier and less dangerous to sustain a maritime

war than a continental war. Maritime war requires only a single kind of effort. A commercial people that consents to give its government the money needed is always sure to have fleets. Now, sacrifices of money can be concealed from nations much more easily than sacrifices of men and personal efforts. Defeats at sea, moreover, rarely compromise the existence or the independence of the people who experience them.

As for continental wars, it is clear that the peoples of Europe cannot wage dangerous wars against the American Union.

It is very difficult to transport to and to maintain in America more than 25,000 soldiers; this represents a nation of about 2,000,000 people. The greatest European nation fighting against the Union in this way is in the same position as a nation of 2,000,000 inhabitants would be in a war against one of 12,000,000. Add to this that the American has all of his resources at hand and the European is 1,500 leagues from his, and that the immensity of the territory of the United States alone would present an insurmountable obstacle to conquest.

Second Part

(A) Page 298

In April 1704 the first American newspaper appeared. It was published in Boston. See *Collection of the Historical Society of Massachusetts,* vol. VI, p. 66.

You would be wrong to believe that the periodical press has always been entirely free in America; attempts were made there to establish something analogous to prior censorship and to the surety bond.

Here is what you find in the legislative documents of Massachusetts, for the date of 14 January 1722.

The committee named by the general assembly (the legislative body of the province) to study the affair relating to the newspaper entitled: *New England Courant*[h]

h. In the first edition: "*Courant* (which was written by the celebrated Franklin) . . ." The error was corrected in the following editions.

> thinks that the tendency of the said newspaper is to ridicule religion and make it sink into contempt; that the holy authors are treated in a profane and irreverent manner; that the conduct of the ministers of the Gospel is interpreted with malice; that the government of His Majesty is insulted, and that the peace and tranquillity of this province are disturbed by the said newspaper; consequently, the committee is of the opinion that, in the future, James Franklin, printer and editor, be forbidden to print or publish the said newspaper or any other writing, without having submitted them in advance to the Secretary of the province. The justices of the peace of the town of Suffolk will be charged with obtaining from Mr. Franklin a bond that will be a pledge for his good conduct during the coming year.

The proposal of the committee was accepted and became law, but the effect was null. The newspaper eluded the interdiction by putting the name of *Benjamin* Franklin in place of *James* Franklin beneath its columns, and opinion finally put an end to the measure.

(B) Page 445

In order to be county voters (those who represent landed property) before the reform bill passed in 1832, it was necessary to have by sole ownership or by lifetime lease capital in land bringing in 40 shillings in net income. This law was made under Henry VI, about 1450. It has been calculated that 40 shillings at the time of Henry VI would be equivalent to 30 pounds sterling today. This amount adopted in the XVth century was allowed to remain, however, until 1832, which proves how much the English constitution became democratic over time, even while appearing immobile. See *Delolme,* book I, ch. IV; also see *Blackstone,* book I, ch. IV.

English jurors are chosen by the county sheriff (*Delolme,* vol. I, ch XII [XIII (ed.)]. The sheriff is in general a prominent man of the county; he fulfills judicial and administrative functions; he represents the King, and is named by him every year (*Blackstone,* book I, ch. IX). His position puts him above suspicion of corruption on the part of the parties; if, moreover, his impartiality is put in doubt, the jury that he has named can be recused en masse, and then another officer is charged with choosing new jurors. See *Blackstone,* book III, ch. XXIII.

To have the right to be a juror, it is necessary to own capital in land, with a value of at least 10 shillings in income. (*Blackstone,* book III, ch. XXIII). You will note that this condition was imposed during the reign of William and Mary, that is toward 1700, a period when the value of money was infinitely higher than today. You see that the English based their jury system, not on capacity but on landed property, like all their other political institutions.

In the end farmers were admitted to the jury, but it was required that their leases be very long, and that they have a net income of 20 shillings, apart from the rent. (*Blackstone,* idem.)

(C) Page 445

The federal constitution introduced the jury into the courts of the Union in the same way that the states had introduced it into their particular courts; in addition, the federal constitution did not establish its own rules about the choice of jurors. Federal courts draw from the ordinary list of jurors that each state has drawn up for its use. So it is the laws of the states that must be examined to know the theory of the composition of the jury in America. See Story's *Commentaries on the Constitution,* book III, ch. XXXVIII, pp. 654–59; Sergeant's *Constitutional Law,* p. 165. Also see the federal laws of 1789, 1800 and 1820 on the subject.

To show clearly the principles of the Americans regarding the composition of the jury, I have drawn upon the laws of states far from each other. Here are the general ideas that can be derived from this examination.

In America, all citizens who are voters have the right to be jurors. The large state of New York has, however, established a slight difference between those two capacities; but it is in the direction opposite to our laws, that is to say, there are fewer jurors than voters in the state of New York. In general, you can say that in the United States the right to be part of a jury, like the right to elect representatives, extends to everyone; but the exercise of this right is not put indiscriminately into all hands.

Each year a body of municipal or district magistrates, called *selectmen* in New England, *supervisors* in the state of New York, *trustees* in Ohio, parish *sheriffs* in Louisiana, choose for each district a certain number of

citizens having the right to be jurors, and among whom they assume the capacity to be so. These magistrates, being elected themselves, do not excite distrust; their powers are very extensive and very arbitrary, like those of republican magistrates in general, and it is said that they often use those powers, above all in New England, in order to remove unworthy or incompetent jurors.

The names of the jurors thus chosen are sent on to the county court, and from the totality of these names, the jury that must deliver the verdict in each affair is drawn by lot.

The Americans have, moreover, tried by all possible means to put the jury within reach of the people, and to make it as little burdensome as possible. Since the jurors are very numerous, each person's turn comes scarcely every three years. The sessions are held in the chief seat of each county; the county corresponds more or less to our *arrondissement.* Thus, the court comes to be located near the jury, instead of drawing the jury close to it, as in France; finally the jurors are paid, either by the state, or by the parties. They receive, in general, one dollar (5.42 fr.) per day, apart from travel expenses. In America the jury is still regarded as a burden, but it is a burden easy to bear, and one you submit to without difficulty.

See Brevard's *Digest of the Public Statute Law of South Carolina,* 2nd vol., p. 338; *id.,* vol. I, pp. 454 and 456; *id.,* vol. II, p. 218.

See *The General Laws of Massachusetts revised and published by authority of the legislature,* vol. II, pp. 331, 187 [141].

See *The Revised Statutes of the State of New York,* vol. II, pp. 720, 411, 717, 643.

See *The Statute Law of the State of Tennessee,* vol. I, p. 209.

See *Acts of the State of Ohio,* pp. 95 and 210.

See *Digeste général des actes de la législature de la Louisiane,* vol. II, p. 55.

(D) Page 449

When you closely examine the constitution of the civil jury among the English, you easily discover that the jurors never escape the control of the judge.

It is true that the verdict of the jury, civil as well as criminal, generally

includes fact and law in a simple statement. Example: A house is claimed by Peter as one he bought, here is the fact. His adversary raises the objection of the incompetence of the seller, here is the law. The jury limits itself to saying that the house will be put back in Peter's hands; thus it decides fact and law. When introducing the jury in civil matters, the English did not keep the infallibility of the opinion of the jurors that they granted in criminal matters, when the verdict is favorable.

If the judge thinks that the verdict has made a false application of the law, he can refuse to receive it, and send the jurors back to deliberate.

If the judge allows the verdict without comment, the proceedings are still not entirely settled: there are several paths of recourse open against the decision. The principal one consists of asking the courts to void the verdict and to assemble a new jury. It is true to say that such a demand is rarely granted and never more than two times. Nonetheless, I saw the case happen before my eyes. See *Blackstone,* book III, ch. XXIV; *id.,* book III, ch. XXV.

VOLUME 2

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA[a]

a. Introduction to the third volume./

Ideas about the plan of this volume./

Perhaps most of the things contained in this bundle will be useful for the large final chapter in which I intend to summarize the subject./

Influence of democracy. *Ter* [three (ed.)]:

I. Ideas

II. Sentiments. This relates only to man in isolation.

III. Customs. They include the relationships of men with one another.

What is American or English without being democratic.

Great difficulty in disentangling what is *democratic, commercial, English* and *Puritan.*

To explain in the foreword.

My principal subject is not *America,* but the *influence of democracy on America.* As a result, the only one of the four causes set forth above that I must dwell upon seriously and at length is the *democratic.* Perhaps not because it is the principal one (what I believe, moreover), but because it is the one that is most important for me to show. I must speak about the others only: 1. To interest the class of readers who want above all to know America, 2. To make myself clearly understood, 3. To show that I am not exclusive and entirely given to a single idea.

[In the margin: I see all the other causes, but I am only looking at the democratic.]

If, among these various causes, I always choose by preference to deal with the democratic cause, let me not therefore be accused of an exclusive mind.

I do not believe it necessary to treat the *commercial, English* and *Puritan* causes separately. I only think that I must show in the course of the book that I know and appreciate them.

To speak about the four causes only in the preface and only there give them their respective places.

Important idea.

After finishing, look carefully at the places where I could point out how the things produced by democracy help democracy in turn and indirectly.

[On the following page] Perhaps in the large final chapter.

Idea of democratic liberty and idea of religion.

Foreword[b]

The Americans have a democratic social state that has naturally suggested to them certain laws and certain political mores.[c]

In civil society as in political society, these two points of departure explain nearly everything. And I must come back to that in a general way, either at the beginning or at the end of the third volume (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 39–41).

b. Several notes and fragments indicate that Tocqueville had considered writing a long preface that contained a good number of ideas present in the fourth and last part of the book (it constituted a single chapter in the first drafts). Did the sheer size of the last chapter lead him to sacrifice the preface? This preface was reduced to a foreword, and certain ideas of the introduction (including the admission of his error concerning the weakening of the federal bond) did not finally find their place in the first pages of this volume.

Some notes of rough drafts that present a version of the foreword very similar to the final version bear the date 5 February 1838. In the following months, however, Tocqueville did not stop coming back to the idea of writing a long introduction to the second volume and hesitated about whether to place certain fragments at the beginning or at the end of the book.

"One of the principal ideas of the preface must be, it seems to me, to show in brief all the dissimilarities that exist between the American democracy and ours. Democracy pushing men further in certain directions in America than it does among us (sciences, arts), in certain others pushing them not as far (religion, good morals)" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 48).

> Note relative to the preface of my great work.
> It must be shown how recent events justify most of the things that I said.
> Indians.
> Texas.
> Negroes.
> The necessity of having troops in the cities.
> Ultra-democratic tendencies.
> Admit my error. The weakening of the federal bond (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 39).

c. First paragraphs of the book in a rough draft:

> The work which appears at this moment (illegible word) the public is not an entirely new work. It is the second and last part of a book that I published five years ago on democracy in the United States.

This same social state has, moreover, given birth among them to a multitude of sentiments and opinions that were unknown in the old aristocratic societies of Europe. It has destroyed or modified relationships that formerly existed and established new ones. The appearance of civil society has been no less changed than the physiognomy of the political world.

I dealt with the first subject in the work that I published five years ago on American democracy. The second is the subject of the present book. These two parts complement one another and form only a single work.[d]

I must immediately warn the reader against an error that would be very prejudicial to me.

Seeing me attribute so many diverse effects to equality, he could conclude

When there are no more castes, distinct features, particular and exclusive rights, permanent riches, entailed estates, citizens differ little from each other by their conditions, and they constantly change conditions; they naturally adopt certain laws, and contract certain habits of government that are appropriate to them.

This same equality and these same causes influence not only their political ideas and habits, but also all their habits and all their ideas. The men who live in this democratic social state conceive new opinions; they adopt new mores; they establish relationships among themselves that did not exist or modify those that already existed. The appearance of civil society is not less changed than the physiognomy of the political world.

[To the side, with a bracket that includes the two previous paragraphs: Louis would say that only about the Americans.]

≠The object of the book that I published five years ago was to show the first effects of equality; this one wants to depict the second. The two parts united form a single whole.≠

It is this second portion of the subject that I wanted to treat in the present book.

I am assuredly very far from claiming to have seen everything on so vast a ground. I am even certain that I have discovered only a small part of what it includes.

The Revolution that reduced to dust the aristocratic society in which our fathers lived is the great event of the time. It has changed everything, modified everything, altered everything. [v: hit everything].

[In the margin, with a bracket that includes the two previous paragraphs] To delete, I think (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 35–36).

d. "The first book more American than democratic. This one more democratic than American" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 53).

that I consider equality as the unique cause of all that happens today.[e] This would assume a very narrow view on my part.

There is, in our time, a host of opinions, sentiments, instincts that owe their birth to facts foreign or even contrary to equality. Thus, if I took the United States as an example, I would easily prove that the nature of the country, the origin of the inhabitants, the religion of the first founders, their acquired enlightenment, their previous habits, exercised and still exercise, independently of democracy, an immense influence on their way of thinking and feeling. Different causes, also distinct from the fact of equality, would be found in Europe and would explain a great part of what is happening there.

I recognize the existence of all these different causes and their power, but talking about them is not my subject. I have not undertaken to show

e. In Preface, I believe.

Explain somewhere what I understand by centuries of equality [v: democratic centuries]. It is not that chimerical time when all men will be perfectly similar and equal, but those:

1. When a great number among them will be in (two illegible words) and when a greater number will fall either above or below, but not far from the common measure.

2. Those when there will be no more permanent classification, caste, class, any insurmountable barrier or even one very difficult to surmount, so that if all men are not equal, they can all aspire to the same point; some being able (illegible word) to fear falling, others to hope to rise, so that a common measure makes itself (illegible word) against which all men measure themselves in advance, which spreads the sentiment of equality even within unequal conditions.

—22 June 1838 (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 45–46).

In another place, he explains:

Two close but distinct propositions:

1. I cannot show all that equality does and will do.

2. I do not claim to link everything to equality, but only to show where equality acts (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 53).

"Idea of the preface or of the last chapter./

"That democracy is not the cause of everything, but that it mixes with everything, and has a part in all the causes" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 42).

the reason for all our inclinations and all our ideas; I have only wanted to show to what extent equality had modified both.[f]

You will perhaps be surprised that, since I am firmly of the opinion that the democratic revolution we are witnessing is an irresistible fact against which it would be neither desirable nor wise to struggle, I have often ended up addressing such harsh words in this book to the democratic societies created by this revolution.

I will simply reply that it is because I was not an adversary of democracy that I have wanted to be candid about it.[g]

Men do not receive the truth from their enemies, and their friends hardly ever offer the truth to them; that is why I have spoken it.

I have thought that many would take it upon themselves to announce the new good things that equality promises to men, but that few would dare to point out from a distance the perils with which it threatens them. So it

f. Principal object. Somewhere.

I want to make *everyone* understand that a democratic social state is an invincible necessity in our time.

Dividing then my readers into enemies and friends of democracy, I want to make the first understand that for a democratic social state to be tolerable, for it to be able to produce order, progress, in a word, to avoid all the evils that they anticipate, at least the greatest ones, they must at all costs hasten to give *enlightenment* and *liberty* to the people who already have such a social state.

To the second, I want to make them understand that democracy cannot give the happy fruits that they expect from it except by combining it with morality, spiritualism, beliefs . . .

I thus try to unite all honest and generous minds within a small number of common ideas.

As for the question of knowing if such a social state is or is not the best that humanity can have, may God himself say so. Only God can say (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 55–56).

g. "I am profoundly persuaded that you can succeed in making democratic peoples into prosperous, free, powerful, moral and happy nations. So I do not despair of the future, but I think that peoples, like men, in order to make the most of their destiny, need to know themselves, and that to master events, it is above all necessary to master yourself" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 33).

"Idea of bringing democracy to moderate itself. Idea of the book" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 39).

is principally toward these perils that I have directed my attention, and, believing that I have clearly discerned them, I have not had the cowardice to say nothing about them.[h]

I hope that you will find again in this second work the impartiality[j] that seemed to be noted in the first. Placed in the middle of the contradictory opinions that divide us, I have tried to eradicate temporarily in my heart the favorable sympathies or contrary instincts that each one of them inspires in me. [I have wanted to live alone in order to keep my mind free.] If those who read my book find a single sentence that aims to flatter one of the great parties that have agitated our country, or one of the small factions that bother and enervate it today, may those readers raise their voices and accuse me.

The subject that I have wanted to embrace is immense; for it includes most of the sentiments and ideas that the new state of the world brings forth. Such a subject assuredly exceeds my powers;[k] while treating it, I have not succeeded in satisfying myself.

But, if I have not been able to achieve the goal that I set, readers will at least do me the justice of granting that I have conceived and followed my enterprise in the spirit that could make me worthy to succeed in it.[m]

h. In a first version of this paragraph, Tocqueville added: "<Far from wanting to stop the development of the new society, I am trying to produce it>" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 44).

j. "This in the preface.

"I am often obliged to repeat myself because I want to divide what is indivisible, the soul. The same soul constantly produces an idea and a sentiment. Place there the already completed piece in which I compare the soul to a milieu whose ideas and sentiments are like beams . . ." (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 30).

k. "Not only do I not claim to have seen everything in my subject, but I am certain I have seen only a very small part. The democratic revolution is the great event of our days, it spreads to everything, it modifies or changes everything. There is nothing that cannot or perhaps should not be dealt with while speaking about it. I have said all that I have seen clearly, leaving to those more skillful or to men enlightened by a longer experience to portray the rest" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 47).

m. Ideas of the preface or of the last chapter:

> In order to make myself well understood I have constantly been obliged to depict extreme states, an aristocracy without a mixture of democracy, a democracy without a mixture of aristocracy, a perfect equality which is an imaginary state. Then I come to attribute to one or the other of the two principles more complete effects than those that they generally produce because, in general, they are not alone. In my words, the

reader must distinguish what my true opinion is, from what is said in order to make it well understood (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 51).

To say in the preface, if not in the book.

Idea of races.

I do not believe that there are races destined for liberty and others for servitude, some for happiness and enlightenment, others for misfortunes and ignorance. These are cowardly doctrines.

Doctrines, however. Why? That is due to the natural vice of the human mind in democratic times [and of the heart that makes these peoples tend toward materialism. This idea of the invisible influence of race is an essentially materialistic idea], apart from the weakening of beliefs.

That the generative idea of this book is directly the opposite, since I begin invincibly at this point that whatever the tendencies of the social state, men can always modify them and ward off the bad tendencies while appropriating the good (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 37).

FIRST PART[a]

Influence of Democracy on the Intellectual Movement in the United States

a. The rough drafts indicate that in the beginning the first chapter included a large portion of the ideas that now constitute the following chapters: the taste for general ideas, general ideas in politics and certain considerations from chapter V on religion. Chapters VI and VII are not in the summary of chapters copied in notebook CVf, which suggests that they were included when the work of writing was already well advanced.

Concerning the other chapters of the first part, a note mentions:

> A chapter IV was found here in which I explained at length the influence that the philosophical method of the Americans exercised on the relationships of father and children, of master and servant, on women, the customs of societies.
>
> This spoiled the subject and treated it incompletely, for all these things have a particular character under democracy not only because of the philosophical doctrine given birth by equality, but also for a thousand other causes that cannot, consequently, be treated here.
>
> I believe however that for the mind of the reader, tired by the long theory that precedes, to rest in applications, I would do [well (ed.)] in a very short chapter to point out how in fact the philosophical method of the Americans can *influence* (not cause) all these things (YTC, CVj, I, pp. 91–92).

In a letter to Beaumont of 14 June 1836 (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 160), Tocqueville announced his intention to finish the first part before his departure for Switzerland in mid-July, which allows us reasonably to date the first version of this part to the summer of 1836. It is in November 1838, when he begins the revision of his manuscript, that Tocqueville, in another letter to Beaumont (*ibid.,* pp. 325–26) alludes to the confusion of the first two chapters and the necessity to review them. In the following letter (*ibid.,* p. 328), he says he has thrown the first one hundred pages of the manuscript into the fire and entirely rewritten them. Another letter of the same month to Francisque de Corcelle confirms these statements (*Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 1, p. 105).

CHAPTER I[a]

In the beginning, the organization of the first chapters probably must have appeared as follows: (1) A long chapter on philosophical method, including a certain number of ideas that were later moved or that formed independent chapters, like the one on pantheism, which now bears number 7. (2) The origin of beliefs among democratic peoples. (3) A chapter on religion. (4) The influence of philosophical method on the relations of the father with his children, of the master with his servants, on woman and on habits. (5) The taste for general ideas. (6) Science and the arts.

a. "While rereading and recasting my manuscript, do, after each chapter, a small outline of what it contains; a kind of *assets* and *liabilities* of democracy; that will marvelously facilitate for me the final tableau, which it is immensely important to do well" (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 11–12).

Notebook F of the manuscript collection of Yale reproduces short summaries of each chapter. The first page bears the date April 1840. Here is the summary of this chapter:

> 1. That the Americans show by their actions that they have a philosophical method, even though they have neither philosophical school nor philosophical doctrine strictly speaking.
>
> 2. That this method consists principally of drawing your opinions only from within yourself, as Descartes indicates.
>
> 3. That it is principally from their social state that they have drawn this method and that it is the same cause that has made it adopted in Europe.
>
> 4. That the Americans have not made so great a use of this method as the French: 1. Because they got from their origin a more fixed religion. 2. Because they are not and have never been in revolution. 3. As a result of a still more general and powerful cause that I am going to develop in the following chapter and that in the long run must limit, among all democratic peoples, the intellectual independence given birth by equality (YTC, CVf, pp. 1–2).

The first draft of this chapter (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 42–82) contains some ideas that afterward will acquire sufficient importance to constitute independent chapters (chapters 2 to 8). Tocqueville clearly hesitated a great deal about the content of the first chapter, finding himself inclined to speak about individualism before everything else.

"Perhaps," Tocqueville noted again in a rough draft, "begin the whole book with the chapters on individualism and the taste for material enjoyments. Nearly everything flows from there in ideas as well as in sentiments" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 12).

It is probably on the advice of Kergorlay, who spent the autumn of 1838 at the Tocqueville château at the very time when the author worked on the revision of the first version

Of the Philosophical Method of the Americans[b]

I think that in no country in the civilized world is there less interest in philosophy than in the United States.

The Americans have no philosophical school of their own, and they worry very little about all those that divide Europe; they hardly know their names.

of his manuscript, and who found the first two chapters remarkably well written, that Tocqueville changed his mind.

In another place:

> Of all the chapters that precede the IXth where I am now (December 1838), there is not a single one in which I have not felt the need to assume that the reader knew either what leads democratic peoples to *individualism,* or what leads them to the *taste for material enjoyments.* The experience of these eight chapters tends to prove that the two chapters on *individualism* and material enjoyments should precede the others.
>
> L[ouis (ed.)]. thinks that whatever logical interest there might be in beginning with the two chapters above, I must persevere in placing the chapter on method at the beginning. That, he says, opens the subject very grandly and makes it immediately seen from a very elevated perspective (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 11).

Chapter 9 in the manuscript is now number 11, entitled: IN WHAT SPIRIT THE AMERICANS CULTIVATE THE ARTS.

Another note, probably prior, suggested: "Perhaps do a chapter on the influence of democracy on the moral sciences. I do not believe that the first chapter of the book corresponds to that" (YTC, CVa, p. 45).

b. Chap. 1.

> This first chapter treats a very abstract matter. Extreme efforts must be made to make it clear and perceptible, otherwise the reader would be discouraged.
>
> In this chapter there are two ideas that I take up and leave alternately in a way that is fatiguing for the mind, it is that of an *independent method* and of the *inclination and aptitude for general ideas.*
>
> Either these two ideas must be intimately linked with each other, or they must be separated entirely and treated individually.
>
> Perhaps explain in a few words the meaning of the expressions: general ideas, generalization, method (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 42).

The jacket that contains the manuscript of the chapter bears this note: "≠There is no society without common ideas and no common ideas if on each point each person is abandoned to the solitary and individual effort of his reason.≠"

It is easy to see, however, that nearly all the inhabitants of the United States direct their minds in the same way, and conduct them according to the same rules; that is to say, they possess, without ever having taken the trouble to define its rules, a certain philosophical method that is common to all of them.

To escape from the spirit of system, from the yoke of habits, from the maxims of family,[c] from the opinions of class, and, to a certain point, from the prejudices of nation; to take tradition only as information, and present facts only as a useful study for doing otherwise and better; to seek by yourself and in yourself alone the reason for things, to strive toward the result without allowing yourself to be caught up in the means, and to aim for substance beyond form: such are the principal features that characterize what I will call the philosophical method of the Americans.[d]

If I go still further and, among these various features, look for the principal one and the one that can sum up nearly all the others, I discover that, in most operations of the mind, each American appeals only to the individual effort of his reason.

So America is one of the countries of the world where the precepts of Descartes are least studied and best followed.[e] That should not be a surprise.

c. In the rough drafts and first versions: ". . . from the maxims of State" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 21; another version, p. 43).

d. In the margin, in pencil: "{And religion, Ampère?}"

Jean-Jacques Ampère, writer and historian with eclectic tastes, son of the famous physicist. Tocqueville met him in 1835 in the salon of Madame Récamier, with whom Ampère was in love for fifteen years. We know little about the beginning of the friendship between Tocqueville and Ampère, but we know that the author of the *Democracy* read several chapters of this volume to him and asked for his advice on several occasions. From 1841, the Tocqueville château sheltered in one of its towers a *room of Ampère,* always ready to receive him. Indefatigable traveler, Ampère ended several of his long journeys by a visit to the Tocquevilles.

Upon the death of the author, Ampère published a touching article on "his best friend": "Alexis de Tocqueville," *Correspondant,* 47, 1859, pp. 312–35. The correspondence of Tocqueville with Ampère has been published in volume XI of *Œuvres complètes.*

e. "Although Descartes professes a great scorn for the crowd, his method is based on the idea of the equality of minds, for if I must rely on myself why would you not do the same?

"Protestantism itself already announced that society had become very democratic" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 13).

Americans do not read the works of Descartes, because their social state diverts them from speculative studies, and they follow his maxims because the same social state naturally disposes their mind to adopt them.[f]

Amid the constant movement that reigns within a democratic society,[g] the bond that links generations together weakens or breaks; each man easily loses track of the ideas of his ancestors, or is hardly concerned about them.

Nor can the men who live in such a society draw their beliefs from the opinions of the class to which they belong, for there are so to speak no longer any classes, and those that still exist are composed of elements so fluid, that the corps can never exercise a true power over its members.[h]

As for the action that the intelligence of one man can have on that of another, it is necessarily very limited in a country where citizens, having become more or less similar, all see each other at very close range; and, not noticing in any one of them the signs of incontestable greatness and superiority, they are constantly brought back to their own reason[j] as the most

"Descartes, the greatest democrat" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 53).

A letter from Kergorlay dated 27 June 1834 (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 384–89) suggests that the two friends had had the project of reading together the *Discours de la méthode.* It contains the first impressions of Kergorlay on reading this work.

f. In the margin: "<Perhaps transfer here several of the things that I say in the chapter on *revolutions.* Here the foundations are found, they must be well secured before building.>"

g. "A democratic people, society, time does not mean a people, society, time in which all men are equal, but a people, society, time in which there are no more castes, fixed classes, privileges, particular and exclusive rights, permanent riches, properties fixed in the hands of families, in which all men can constantly rise or descend and mingle together in all ways.

"When I mean it in the political sense, I say *democracy.*

"When I want to speak about the effects of equality, I say *equality"* (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 50–51).

h. In the margin: "<They escape the rule of their own habits, for they change them constantly.>"

j. "Imagine men entirely equal in knowledge, in enlightenment, in reason; rationalism[1] comes into the world.

visible and nearest source of truth. Then it is not only confidence in a particular man that is destroyed, but the taste to believe any man whatsoever on his word.

So each person withdraws narrowly into himself and claims to judge the world from there.

The custom that the Americans have of only taking themselves as guide for their judgment leads their mind to other habits.

Since they see that they manage without help to solve all the small difficulties that their practical life presents, they easily conclude that everything in the world is explicable, and that nothing goes beyond the limits of intelligence.

Thus, they readily deny what they cannot understand; that gives them little faith in the extraordinary and an almost invincible distaste for the supernatural.

Since they are accustomed to relying on their own witness, they love to see the matter that they are dealing with very clearly; so in order to see it more closely and in full light, they rid it as fully as they can of its wrapping; they push aside all that separates them from it, and clear away everything that hides it from their view. This disposition of their mind soon leads them to scorn forms, which they consider as useless and inconvenient veils placed between them and the truth.

So the Americans did not need to draw their philosophical method from books, they found it within themselves. I will say the same about what happened in Europe.

This same method became established and popularized in Europe only as conditions there became more equal and men more similar.

Let us consider for a moment the train of events:

"Rationalism, general ideas: two things produced by equality, but distinct.

"Necessity that religions have in democratic centuries of winning over common opinion.

"1. I use this modern word without understanding it well. The most natural meaning to give it is the *independence of individual reason"* (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 10–11).

In the XVIth century, the men of the Reformation[k] subject some of the dogmas of the ancient faith to individual reason; but they continue to exclude all the others from discussion.[m] In the XVIIth, Bacon, in the natural sciences, and Descartes, in philosophy strictly speaking, abolish accepted formulas, destroy the rule of traditions and overthrow the authority of the master.[n]

k. In the margin of a first version belonging to the rough drafts: "The Protestant religion (perhaps religions should only be touched as little as possible for fear of burning my fingers)" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 45).

m. I suppose that knowing the language that our fathers spoke, I do not know their history. I open the books of the (three illegible words) of the XVIth century. I understand that there one preaches to men that each one of them has the right and the ability to choose the particular road that should lead to heaven. I am assured that half of the nations of Europe have adopted this new doctrine. That is enough. I do not need to be taught that a great political revolution has preceded and accompanied the religious revolution whose history is provided for me.

[v: That is enough. I already know without anyone telling me that in a nation in which intellectual equality is thus professed and accepted, a very great inequality in conditions cannot exist and that whatever the external appearances of political society may still be, men have already come very close to a common level]" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 13–14).

n. Fragment on a separate sheet of the manuscript:

Read the preliminary portion of the *Novum Organum* entitled *subject and plan,* p. 263 and following, and compare the manner in which Bacon explains his method concerning the physical senses to the manner in which Descartes, more or less at the same time, conceived and explained his method concerning the moral sciences, and you will be astonished to see to what degree the two methods are identical and how these new truths occur in the same way to these two minds.

This is obviously not the result of chance, but indicates a general direction of the human mind in this period. Bacon and Descartes, like all great revolutionaries, made ideas that were already spread in all minds *clear and systematic./*

They gave the general formula applicable to all the particular truths that each person began to find at hand everywhere./

Bacon, 1561–1626.

The *Novum Organum* (instrument) was published in 1620./

"Our method," says Bacon (p. 264), "submits to examination what ordinary logic adopts on the faith of others and by deferring blindly to authority. [. . . (ed.) . . .] Instead of rushing, so to speak, as is commonly done, toward the most elevated principles and the most general propositions in order then to deduce middle propositions, it begins on the contrary with natural history and particular facts and

The philosophers of the XVIIIth century, finally generalizing the same principle, undertake to submit to the individual examination of each man the object of all his beliefs.o

climbs only imperceptibly and with an extreme slowness up the ascending ladder, to entirely general propositions and to principles of the first order./

"The seat of human understanding," he says below, "must be rid of all received opinions and methods, then the mind must be turned in an appropriate way toward the facts that must enlighten it; finally, when it is sufficiently prepared, these facts must be presented to it."/

Obviously not only is a new scientific method introduced there, but also a great revolution of the human mind is begun or rather *legalized, theorized.*

From the moment when observation, the detailed and analytical observation of facts, is the condition of all scientific progress, there is no longer a means to have anything other than individual and formed beliefs in scientific matters. Received or dogmatic beliefs are chased from that entire portion of the human mind.

Tocqueville takes this quotation from the preface of Bacon's work which is entitled: "Spirit, Subject, Purpose, and Plan of the Work."

o. The manuscript says:

If I put aside the opinions of the French philosophers of the XVIIIth century and their actions, which must be considered as fortuitous accidents caused by the particular state of their country, in order to envisage only the fundamental principles that constituted their method, I discover that the same rules that directed their minds lead that of the Americans today. I see that in the period when they wrote the old aristocratic society among us was finally dissolving; this makes me see clearly that the philosophical method of the XVIIIth century is not only French but democratic, and that is why it was so easily adopted in all of Europe and why it contributed so powerfully to changing the face of Europe. I do not claim that this method could only arise in democratic centuries, but I am saying that men who live during these centuries are particularly disposed by their social state to find and to accept this method, and that it is only during that time that it can become usual and popular.

If someone asks me why, today . . .

In a rough draft, the author specified:

The first use that the French philosophers made of their liberty was to attack all religions with a kind of fury and particularly the Christian religion. I believe that this must be considered as a pure accident, a fact particular to France, the result of extraordinary circumstances that might never have been found and that already to a great extent no longer exist.

Who does not see that Luther, Descartes[p] and Voltaire used the same method, and that they differ only in the greater or lesser use that they claimed to make of it?

Why did the men of the Reformation enclose themselves so narrowly in the circle of religious ideas? Why did Descartes want to use it only in certain matters, although he made his method applicable to everything, and declare that only philosophical and not political things must be judged by oneself? How did it happen that in the XVIIIth century general applications that Descartes and his predecessors had not noticed or had refused to see were all at once drawn from that same method? Finally, why in that period did the method we are speaking about suddenly emerge from the schools to penetrate society and become the common rule of intelligence, and why, after becoming popular among the French, was it openly adopted or secretly followed by all the peoples of Europe?

The philosophical method in question was able to arise in the XVIth century, to take shape and become general in the XVIIth; but it could not be commonly adopted in either one of the two. Political laws, the social state, the habits of the mind that flow from these first causes, were opposed to it.

It was discovered in a period when men began to become equal and similar to each other. It could only be generally followed in centuries

I am persuaded that the revolutionary influence (two illegible words) France is due much less [to (ed.)] its very ideas than to the philosophical method that provided them. It is not because they shook Christianity in their country, changed their laws, modified their mores that they turned Europe upside down. It is because they were the first to point out to the human mind a new method by the aid of which you could easily attack all things old and open the way to all things new.

And if someone asks me why foreign peoples so readily conformed to the new method that the French brought to light, I will answer that like the French, although to a lesser degree, they were naturally disposed by their social state to adopt it (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 54–56).

The same idea appears at the beginning of his "Social and Political State of France Before and Since 1789" (*OC,* II, 1, p. 34).

p. "Descartes was Catholic by his beliefs and Protestant by his method" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 32).

when conditions had finally become nearly similar and men almost the same.

So the philosophical method of the XVIIIth century is not only French, but democratic,[q] which explains why it was so easily accepted everywhere in Europe, whose face it so much contributed to changing. It is not because the French changed their ancient beliefs and modified their ancient mores that they turned the world upside down; it is because they were the first to generalize and bring to light a philosophical method by the aid of which you could easily attack all things old and open the way to all things new.

If someone now asks me why, today, this same method is followed more rigorously and applied more often among the French than among the Americans, among whom equality is nonetheless as complete and older, I will answer that it is due in part to two circumstances that must first be made clear.

It is religion that gave birth to the Anglo-American societies: that must never be forgotten; so in the United States religion merges with all national habits and all sentiments that the country brings forth; that gives it a particular strength.[r]

q. "It is not Luther, Bacon, Descartes, Voltaire that must be blamed. They only gave form or application; the substance emerged from the state of the world in their time" (*Rubish,* 1).

r. All the peoples of Europe were born in centuries when the ardor of religious passions reigned, but American society was established especially in order to satisfy these very passions. It was created in order to obey rules prescribed by a positive belief and it is a direct product of faith. The influence of this premier fact grows weaker each day; it is still powerful; and if the Americans are dogmatic in the matter of religion that is not because their social state is democratic, but because their origin is Puritan.

Although philosophy and religion are two distinct things, there nevertheless exists between them a very close link that makes them in some way depend on each other. When the human mind has indeed stopped within the fixed limits of a religious belief, philosophy merges so to speak with religion or at least it becomes as exclusive and nearly as stable as religion itself. When on the contrary religious beliefs are shaken, philosophical systems proliferate.

The Americans do not concern themselves with proving by metaphysical reasons the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, they do not try to mark out

the rules of human morality, and do not claim to discover the common principle that should govern the actions of man. They believe in the authenticity of a book in which God himself, addressing immortal creatures, took care to set down with his powerful hand the limit of good and evil.

[In the margin: This is very good and merits being kept; perhaps it should be placed where I show how aristocracy immobilizes the mind.]

(three illegible words) the greatest of the philosophical questions that have divided the world for six thousand years seem hardly to preoccupy the mind of the Americans.

This results from yet another cause than the one indicated above.

Although philosophical systems can in the long run exercise a powerful influence on the destinies of the human species, they seem to have only a very indirect connection with the fate of each man in particular; it follows that it can excite only a secondary interest in the latter. So men never feel carried toward philosophical studies by an actual and pressing need, they devote themselves to them for pleasure or in order to fill the leisure that the principal affairs of life leave to them. Now in {small} democratic countries generally and in particular in the United States, where so many various raw materials are offered to human activity, few men are found who can be concerned with philosophy, and the latter, should they be found, would lack a public that would be interested in their work and would encourage their efforts.

When a man incessantly pursues well-being or wealth, leads ships to the antipodes of the earth, cuts down forests each day, fills in swamps, transforms the wilderness, he willingly leaves to another the trouble of discovering the limits of free will and of trying to find out the origin of evil.

Of all the branches of human study, philosophy will be, if I am not mistaken, the one that will suffer most from the establishment of democracy. If men, whose social state and habits are democratic, wanted to occupy themselves with philosophy, I do not doubt that they would bring to this matter the boldness and freedom of mind that they display elsewhere. But it can be believed that rarely will they want to be concerned with it.

It is right moreover to distinguish two things with care.

A nation can have a philosophy of its own and have no philosophical system *strictly* speaking. When each of the men who compose a people proves individually by his actions that they all have a certain uniform way of envisaging human affairs, you can say that the people in general have a philosophy even though no one has yet taken on the task of reducing these common notions to a body of knowledge, of specifying these general ideas spread throughout the crowd and of linking them methodically together in a logical order.

When you study the life of the Americans you discover without difficulty that the greater part of all their principal actions are naturally linked to a certain small number of theoretical philosophical opinions to which each man indistinctly conforms his conduct.

Do you know why the inhabitant of the United States (illegible word) does not undertake to control the private conduct of his servants and scarcely reserves the right to counsel his children?

To this powerful reason add this other one, which is no less so: in America, religion has so to speak set its own limits; the religious order there has remained entirely distinct from the political order, so that they were able to change ancient laws easily without shaking ancient beliefs.

So Christianity retained a great dominion over the mind of the Americans, and, what I want to note above all, it reigns not only as a philosophy that you adopt after examination, but also as a religion that you believe without discussion.

In the United States, Christian sects vary infinitely and are constantly changing, but Christianity itself is an established and irresistible fact that no one attempts to attack or defend.

The Americans, having admitted the principal dogmas of the Christian religion without examination, are obliged to receive in the same way a great number of moral truths that arise from it and are due to it. That confines the work of individual analysis within narrow limits, and excludes from it several of the most important human opinions.[s]

Do you understand why he (illegible word) lavishly (two illegible words) of himself . . .

[In the margin: *Examples* drawn from the American theory of the *equality of men,* of the *doctrine of interest.* Each one for himself.

I know that there is a multitude of American actions that have their driving power in these two doctrines, but they do not come back to me at this moment.

End in this way:

So the Americans have a [v: their] philosophy even though they do not have philosophers, and if they do not preach their doctrines in writings, they at least teach them by their actions.

Perfectibility. Nothing draws visible limits to man.

Another very fruitful principle for the Americans.

All philosophical doctrines that can have a close connection to human actions are very fixed in America. Purely theoretical opinions are intermingled with religious doctrines strictly speaking.]

The fact is that the Americans have allowed the Christian religion to direct the small actions of life, and they have adopted [v: have created for themselves] a democratic philosophy for most of the large ones (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 63–69).

s. I am firmly persuaded that if you sincerely applied to the search for the true religion the philosophical method of the XVIIIth century, you would without difficulty discover the truth of the dogmas taught by Jesus Christ, and I think that you would arrive at Christianity by reason as well as by faith. So I am not astonished to see in

The other circumstance that I spoke about is this:

The Americans have a democratic social state and a democratic constitution, but they have not had a democratic revolution. They arrived on the soil that they occupy more or less as we see them. That is very important.

There are no revolutions that do not turn ancient beliefs upside down, enervate authority and cloud common ideas. So every revolution has more or less the effect of leaving men to themselves and of opening before the mind of each one of them an empty and almost limitless space.

When conditions become equal following a prolonged struggle between the different classes that formed the old society, envy, hatred and contempt for neighbor, pride and exaggerated confidence in self, invade, so to speak, the human heart and for some time make it their domain. This, apart from equality, contributes powerfully to divide men, to make them mistrust each other's judgment and seek enlightenment only within themselves alone.[t]

Each person then tries to be self-sufficient and glories in having beliefs that are his own. Men are no longer tied together except by interests and

the Americans sincere Christians, but at first glance, I am surprised by the manner in which they become so. Within Christianity the American mind is deployed with an entirely democratic independence, but it is very rare for it to dare to go beyond these limits that it does not seem to have imposed on itself (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 59–60).

t. General revolt against all authority. Attempt to appeal to individual reason in all things. General and salient character of the philosophy of the XVIIIth century, character essentially democratic.

But much more so when conditions are becoming equal than when conditions are equal. An intellectual anarchy that is revolutionary and not democratic. We see on this point more disorder than we will ever see.

The XVIIIth century exalted the individual (illegible word). It was revolution, not democracy.

Skepticism is found at the beginning of democratic centuries rather than in these centuries.

The philosophy of the XVIIIth century was revolutionary rather than democratic. Try to find out what was revolutionary in it and what was democratic (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 11–12).

not by ideas, and you would say that human opinions no longer form anything other than a kind of intellectual dust that swirls on all sides, powerless to come together and settle.

Thus, the independence of mind that equality suggests is never so great and never appears so excessive as at the moment when equality begins to become established and during the painful work that establishes it. So you must carefully distinguish the type of intellectual liberty that equality can provide, from the anarchy that revolution brings. These two things must be considered separately, in order not to conceive exaggerated hopes and fears about the future.

I believe that the men who will live in the new societies will often make use of their individual reason; but I am far from believing that they will often abuse it.

This is due to a cause more generally applicable to all democratic countries and that, in the long run, must keep individual independence of thought within fixed and sometimes narrow limits.

I am going to speak about it in the chapter that follows.[u]

u. In the manuscript, you find here these two fragments:

TWO GOOD FRAGMENTS THAT WILL PERHAPS BE NECESSARY TO PUT TO USE.

[In the margin: To join to the chapter on method./

This piece would have been excellent in the chapter on *method* if before showing why democratic peoples have an independent individual reason, I had shown why aristocratic peoples do not have it. *To see.*]

In the Middle Ages it was believed that all opinions had to follow from authority. Philosophy, this natural antagonist of authority, had itself, in those times, taken the form of authority; it had taken on the characteristics of a religion. After creating certain opinions by the free and individual force of some minds, it imposed these opinions without discussion and by repressing the force that had given birth to it (see what Aristotle was in the Middle Ages and until the beginning of the XVIIth century when the *Parlement* of Paris forbid under penalty of death either to uphold or to teach any maxim against ancient and approved authors.)

In the XVIIIth century the extreme of the opposite state was reached, that is to say that people claimed to appeal for all things only to individual reason and to chase dogmatic beliefs away entirely, and just as in the Middle Ages the form and the appearance of a religion was given to philosophies, in the XVIIIth century the form and the appearance of philosophy was given to religions.

Today the movement still continues in minds of a second order, but the others understand and accept that received beliefs and discovered beliefs, authority and lib-

erty, individualism and social force are needed at the very same time. The whole question is to decide the limits of these two things.

My whole mind must be bent to that.

24 April 1837.

The other fragment says:

There is no society possible without social conventions, that is to say without a simultaneous agreement of the majority of citizens on certain beliefs, ideas or certain customs that you accept once in order to follow them forever.

There are conventions of this type in democracies as elsewhere, but at the same time that the social state and mores become more democratic, the number of these conventions becomes less. Agreement is reached on very general ideas that place wider and wider limits on the independence of each person and allow variety in a multitude of particular cases and secondary facts to be introduced progressively. It is like a circle that is constantly growing larger and in which individual liberty expands in proportion and becomes agitated.

I will take as an example what is happening in the United States in the matter of religion. It is clear that the Americans to [*sic*] accept the truth of the Christian religion without discussing it.

They have in a way moved the limits of discussion back to the extreme limits of Christianity, but there the spirit of innovation must stop and it stops in fact as if by itself, by a type of tacit and general agreement; while within the interior of Christianity the individual independence given birth by democracy is exercised without constraint and there is no interpretation of the Gospel so strange that does not find . . . [interrupted text (ed.)]

[To the side: Good sentence to introduce in the chapter on philosophical method, in the place where I speak about the religion of the Americans.]

On a strip of paper: "D[emocratic (ed.)] method.

"The democratic tendency that consists of getting to the substance of things without paying attention to the form; in fact, through the formality, [this] is clearly seen in the civil code. Marriage is perfected by consent and only in consent; sale by the desire to sell. . . ."

CHAPTER 2[a]

Of the Principal Source of Beliefs among Democratic Peoples[b]

a. 1. That man cannot do without dogmatic beliefs:

1. Without dogmatic beliefs there are no common ideas and consequently no common action; so they are necessary to society.

2. The individual can have neither the time nor the strength of mind necessary to develop opinions that are his own on all matters. If he undertook it, he would never have anything except vague and incomplete notions. So dogmatic beliefs are necessary to the individual.

2. Therefore, there will always be beliefs of this type. It is only a matter of finding their sources.

3. It is in humanity and not above or beyond that democratic men will place the arbiter of their beliefs.

4. Within the interior of humanity, it is to the mass alone that each individual hands over the care of forming for him opinions that he cannot form for himself on a great number of matters.

5. So intellectual authority will be different, but it will perhaps not be less.

6. Far from fearing that it is disappearing, it must instead be feared that it is becoming too great (YTC, CVf, pp. 2–3).

b. New sources of beliefs. Authority. Sources of beliefs among democratic peoples.

To put in, before or after the chapters in which I treat the influence of equality on philosophy and religion.

Religion—authority.

Philosophy—liberty.

What is happening in the United States in the matter of religion is proof of this.

(Illegible word) difficulty for men to stop at common ideas. Remedy for that in the future. This difficulty is something more *revolutionary* than *democratic.*

The same ideas from this chapter recur two or three times in the course of the work, among others in *associations* and above all in *revolutions;* I must try to treat them completely here, with verve and without being concerned about what I said elsewhere; because that is their natural and principal place. But afterward it would

Dogmatic beliefs are more or less numerous, depending on the times. They are born in different ways and can change form and object; but you cannot make it so that there are no dogmatic beliefs, that is to say, opinions that men receive on trust and without discussion. If each person undertook to form all his opinions himself and to pursue truth in isolation, along paths opened up by himself alone, it is improbable that a great number of men would ever unite together in any common belief.[c]

be necessary to compare this chapter to those I named above, so as to avoid monotony as much as possible, particularly with the chapter on revolutions. There is the danger. I believe however that it can be avoided by painting with moderation in this chapter the natural and true state of democratic peoples relative to beliefs and in the chapter on revolutions by showing (illegible word) and more (illegible word) the exaggeration and the danger of the same tendencies (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 1–2).

The first title of the second chapter had been: OF PARTICULAR CAUSES THAT IN AMERICA CAN HARM THE FREE DEVELOPMENT AND THE GENERALIZATION OF THOUGHT (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 33–42, 82–88). The principal cause, Tocqueville wrote, is the rule of the majority. This idea reappears at the end of the chapter, but without the development and the attention it had received in the rough drafts.

c. Note to reread before reworking this chapter. Capital.

The weakening of beliefs is much more general and more complete during the democratic revolution than when democracy is settled.

Since a multitude of beliefs is then renounced, general confidence in beliefs is shaken.

By belief I mean an opinion that you have not had the time to examine yourself and that you accept on trust because it has been transmitted to you, and because those more clever profess it or because the crowd follows it.

Dogmatic beliefs are supports necessary for the weakness [of (ed.)] men. There is no human mind that is able to find [prove? (ed.)] by itself all the truths that it needs to live. A belief is an instrument that you have not fabricated yourself, but that you use because you lack the time to look for something better.

You cannot hide the fact that equality of conditions, democracy . . . is essentially contrary to *dogmatic beliefs,* that is a capital idea, which I must face throughout this chapter, clarify, explain and carefully delimit in my mind (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 2).

Wilhelm Hennis ("La 'nueva ciencia politica' de Tocqueville," *Revista de estudios politicos* 22, 1981, pp. 7–38) notes that Tocqueville is more like Rousseau than he is a Cartesian because he accepts the necessity of dogmatic beliefs and because he places the grandeur of man in the coincidence of the sentiment of liberty with religious sensibility.

Now, it is easy to see that no society is able to prosper without similar beliefs, or rather none can continue to exist in such a way; for, without common ideas, there is no common action, and, without common action, there are still men, but not a social body. So for society to exist, and, with even more reason, for this society to prosper, all the minds of the citizens must always be brought and held together by some principal ideas; and that cannot happen without each one of them coming at times to draw his opinions from the same source and consenting to receive a certain number of ready-made beliefs.[d]

If I now consider man separately, I find that dogmatic beliefs are no less indispensable for him to live alone than to act in common with his fellows.[e]

But to us this anti-cartesianism seems instead to be a sign of Pascal's influence. Like the author of the *Pensées,* Tocqueville believes that, at the time of his fleeting passage in the world, man must accept certain general ideas that he is incapable of proving or of discovering by himself and that all free human action finds itself within the circle limited by these truths. As Tocqueville wrote to Kergorlay in 1841: "Experience teaches me more and more that the success and the grandeur of this world reside much more in the good choice of these general and generative ideas than in the skillfulness that allows you each day to get yourself out of the small difficulties of the moment" (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 2, p. 100).

Luiz Díez del Corral has more than once demonstrated the influence of Pascal on Tocqueville (as in "El liberalismo de Tocqueville. (La influencia de Pascal.)," *Revista de Occidente* 3, no. 26 (1965): 133–53). See also Luis Díez del Corral, *El pensamiento político de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Alianza, 1989); and Aurelian Craiutu, *Liberalism Under Siege* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2003).

d. "I know only two states bearable for peoples as for men: dogmatic beliefs [v: ignorance] or advanced knowledge, between these two extremes are found doubt and all miseries" (YTC, CVa, p. 41).

e. [In the margin: Beccaria said that authority, society, was the portion of liberty that individuals left to the mass in order to retain a more complete and more assured enjoyment of (illegible word).]

By philosophy I mean all that the individual discovers by the individual effort of his reason.

By religion I mean all that he accepts without discussing it. So philosophy and religion are two natural antagonists. Depending on whether the one or the other predominates in humanity, men tend toward an intellectual individualism without limits, or tend toward having only common opinions and ending at intellectual slavery. These two results are impractical and bad. Philosophy is needed and religions are needed.[1]

If man was forced to prove to himself all the truths that he uses every day, he would never finish doing so; he would wear himself out with preliminary demonstrations without advancing; as he has neither the time, because of the short span of his life, nor the ability, because of the limitations of his mind, to act in this way, he is reduced to holding as certain a host of facts and opinions that he has had neither the leisure nor the power to examine and to verify by himself, but that those more clever have found or that the crowd adopts. On this foundation he builds himself the structure of his own thoughts. It is not his will that leads him to proceed in this manner; the inflexible law of his condition compels him to do so.

There is in this world no philosopher so great that he does not believe

It is clear that the democratic social state must make philosophy as I (illegible word) it predominate.

You must not hide from the fact that when you dogmatically teach a child or a man a doctrine, you are taking away from him the part of liberty that he could have applied to discovering this doctrine himself. From this perspective you put him into slavery. But it is a slavery often necessary for the preservation of the liberty that you leave to him. Thus the beautiful definition of Beccaria is found again.

[In the margin: When a philosophical opinion, after being discovered by the individual reason of one man, spreads by the authority of the name of this man, such a philosophy is temporarily in the state of religion.

I would say as much about all political, scientific, economic doctrines that reign in the same manner.]

When men associate for whatever object, each one gives up a certain portion of his freedom to act and to think that the association can use. Outside of the association, each one regains his individual independence and occupied [*sic*] his mind or his body with what pleases him. Men make associations of all types.

They make some very durable ones that they call societies; they make some very temporary ones by the aid of which they gain a certain precise object that they had in view. A religion (the word is taken here in the common sense) is an association in which you give up your liberty in a permanent way. Associations of this type are necessary.

If man was forced to prove by himself . . .

1. These two principles are arranged in each century and among each people in various proportions; that is nearly the entire history of humanity (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 3–5).

The library of the Tocqueville château had a copy of Beccaria, *Traité des délits et des peines* (Philadelphia [Paris], 1766), translated by Morellet. The contractualist principle that Tocqueville refers to above appears in the second chapter of the edition cited (pp. 6–9).

a million things on the faith of others, and who does not assume many more truths than he establishes.[f]

This is not only necessary but desirable. A man who would undertake to examine everything by himself would only be able to give a little time and attention to each thing; this work would keep his mind in a perpetual agitation that would prevent him from penetrating any truth deeply and from settling reliably on any certitude. His intelligence would be independent and weak at the very same time. So, among the various subjects of human opinions, he must make a choice and adopt many beliefs without discussing them, in order to go more deeply into a small number that he has reserved to examine for himself.[g]

[<In this manner he is misled more, but he deceives himself less.>]

It is true that every man who receives an opinion on the word of others

f. "The great Newton himself resembles an imbecile more by the things that he does not know than he differs from one by the things that he knows" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 36).

In a note destined for the introduction, Tocqueville had written:

> Preface.
>
> There is no man in the world who has ever found, and it is nearly certain that none will ever be met who will find the central ending point for, I am not saying all the beams of general truth, which are united only in God alone, but even for all the beams of a particular truth. Men grasp fragments of truth, but never truth itself. This admitted, the result would be that every man who presents a complete and absolute system, by the sole fact that his system is complete and absolute, is almost certainly in a state of error or falsehood, and that every man who wants to impose such a system on his fellows by force must *ipso facto* and without preliminary examination of his ideas be considered as a tyrant and an enemy of the human species.
>
> [To the side: They intercept some beams from time to time, but they never hold the light in their hand.]
>
> The idea is not mine, but I believe it good. 8 March 1836.
>
> Not to accept or to disregard a fact because the cause escapes you is a great weakness and a great foolishness in the moral and political sciences, as in all the others (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 46–47).

g. In the margin, in pencil: "To reexamine. Ampère."

puts his mind into slavery; but it is a salutary servitude that allows making a good use of liberty.[h]

[That is noticeable above all in dogmatic beliefs whose subject is religion.

Religion, by providing the mind with a clear and precise solution to a great number of metaphysical and moral questions as important as they are difficult to resolve, leaves the mind the strength and the leisure to proceed with calmness and with energy in the whole area that religion abandons to it; and it is not precisely because of religion, but with the help of the liberty and the peace that religion gained for it, that the human mind has often done such great things in the centuries of faith.][j]

So, no matter what happens, authority must always be found somewhere in the intellectual and moral world. Its place is variable, but it necessarily

h. Uncertainty of human judgments./

The one who receives an idea is almost always more convinced of its correctness and absolute truth than the one who conceived and produced it. This appears at first view contrary to good sense and even to experience, but it is so.

The work to which the one who conceived the idea devoted himself in order to make it ready to appear before the public, almost always made him discover certain weak, obscure or even incomplete sides that escape others. The reader or the listener who sees the result of the operation without seeing the operation itself, notices at first the plausible and likely side that is presented to him and, without being concerned about the other side, he seizes the former and holds on to it firmly. I am persuaded that everything considered skepticism is more common among those who teach where certitude is to be found than among those who go to the latter to find certitude.

27 December 1835 (YTC, CVa, pp. 54–55).

And in another place:

A doctrine must never be judged by the one who professes it, but by those who accept it.

[In the margin: That a doctrine must not be judged by the teacher, but by the disciples.]

The most harmful doctrines can lead the man who invented them to very beautiful practical consequences; because, apart from his doctrine, he has the strength of mind, the imagination, the ambition and the energy that made him discover the doctrine and bring it to light. His disciples have nothing more than the doctrine and in them it bears its natural fruits.

29 December 1836 (YTC, CVa, p. 34).

j. "I would readily compare dogmatic beliefs to algebraic quantities by the aid of which you simplify the operations of life" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 5–6).

has a place. Individual independence can be greater or lesser; it cannot be limitless. Thus, the question is not to know if an intellectual authority[k] exists in democratic centuries, but only to know where its repository is and what its extent will be.

I showed in the preceding chapter how equality of conditions made men conceive a kind of instinctive unbelief in the supernatural, and a very high and often exaggerated idea of human reason.

So men who live during these times of equality are not easily led to place the intellectual authority to which they submit outside and above humanity. It is in themselves or their fellows that they ordinarily look for the sources of truth. That would be enough to prove that a new religion cannot be established during these centuries, and that all attempts to bring it to life would be not only impious, but also ridiculous and unreasonable. You can predict that democratic peoples will not easily believe in divine missions, that they will readily scoff at new prophets and that they will want to find the principal arbiter of their beliefs within the limits of humanity and not beyond.

When conditions are unequal and men dissimilar, there are some individuals very enlightened, very learned, very powerful because of their intelligence, and a multitude very ignorant and very limited. So men who live in times of aristocracy are naturally led to take as guide for their opinions the superior reason of one man or of one class, while they are little disposed to recognize the infallibility of the mass.

k. Two effects of authority:

1. More *time* and *freedom of mind* to examine and go deeper into the questions that you reserve for yourself.

2. More assurance in holding your own in the portion that you reserved for yourself and in defending yourself there against external attacks than if you did not have one certain and firmly established point.

Not only are you strong on beliefs that you have *received,* but you are also more confident about beliefs that you formed yourself. The soul acquired the habit of firmly believing and energetically defending all its beliefs, the dogmatic ones as much as the philosophical ones (*Rubish,* 1).

The contrary happens in centuries of equality.[m]

As citizens become more equal and more similar, the tendency of each blindly to believe a certain man or a certain class decreases. The disposition to believe the mass increases, and more and more it is opinion that leads the world.

Not only is common opinion the sole guide that remains for individual reason among democratic peoples; but also it has among these peoples an infinitely greater power than among any other. In times of equality, men,

m. Influence that equality of conditions exercises on philosophy.

The further I go the more I am persuaded that equality of conditions pushes man with an unequaled energy to lose sight of the individual, his dignity, his strength, his value . . . , in order to think no longer of anything except the mass. This single given fact influences nearly all the points of view that men have about humanity in that time. The trace [of it (ed.)] has been found everywhere.

In democracy you see only *yourself* and *all.*

After the influence that equality exercises on philosophical method, say what it exercises on philosophy itself.

[To the side: Question of realists and nominalists, to examine when I treat the influence of equality on philosophy. You tend more and more today to lose sight of the individual in order to see only humanity, that is to say, to become, I believe, *realist.*

See *Revue des deux mondes* of May 1837, literary review of the year]" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 7).

It concerns A.C.T., "Mouvement de la presse française en 1836," *Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, X, 1837, pp. 453–98. On page 456, an account is given of the edition done by Victor Cousin of the works of Abelard and of his definition of the words *realist* and *nominalist.*

In 1840, Tocqueville writes, on the same question, to his English translator:

I believe that the realists are wrong. But above all I am sure that the political tendency of their philosophy, dangerous in all times, is very pernicious in the time in which we live. The great danger of democratic ages, be sure of it, is the destruction or the excessive weakening *of the parts* of the social body in the presence of *the whole.* Everything today that raises up the idea of the individual is healthy. Everything that gives a separate existence to the species and enlarges the notion of the type is dangerous. The mind of our contemporaries runs in this direction by itself. The doctrine of the realists introduced into the political world pushes toward all the abuses of democracy; it is what facilitates despotism, centralization, scorn for particular rights, the doctrine of necessity, all the institutions and all the doctrines that allow the social body to trample men underfoot and that make the nation all and the citizens nothing (Letter to Henry Reeve of 3 February 1840, *Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, pp. 52–53).

because of their similarity, have no faith in each other; but this very similarity gives them an almost unlimited confidence in the judgment of the public; for it does not seem likely to them that, since all have similar enlightenment, truth is not found on the side of the greatest number.[n]

When the man who lives in democratic countries compares himself individually to all those who surround him, he feels with pride that he is equal to each of them; but, when he comes to envisage the ensemble of his fellows and to place himself alongside this great body, he is immediately overwhelmed by his own insignificance and weakness.

This same equality that makes him independent of each one of his fellow citizens in particular, delivers him isolated and defenseless to the action of the greatest number.[o]

So the public among democratic peoples has a singular power the idea of which aristocratic nations would not even be able to imagine. It does not persuade, it imposes its beliefs and makes them penetrate souls by a kind of immense pressure of the mind of all on the intelligence of each.

In the United States, the majority takes charge of providing individuals with a host of ready-made opinions, and thus relieves them of the obligation to form for themselves opinions that are their own. A great number of theories in matters of philosophy, morality and politics are adopted in this way by each person without examination on faith in the public; and,

n. In the margin: "Before having this entire part of my discussion printed, I must reread the analogous things that I say in the chapter on *revolutions* and consider for myself what I should leave there or transfer here."

o. 1. Absence of those intermediate authorities between his own reason and the collective reason of his fellows leaves nothing else as guide except the mass.

2. Each individual, finding himself isolated and weak, finds himself overwhelmed in the presence of the mass.

3. It is only during democratic centuries that you clearly conceive the idea of the mass [{human species}], when you follow it without hesitating, you believe it without discussion and beliefs penetrate souls by a kind [of (ed.)] immense pressure of the mind of the greatest number [v: of all] on the intelligence of each (*Rubish,* 1).

if you look very closely, you will see that religion itself reigns there much less as revealed doctrine than as common opinion.p

p. When you look very closely, you see that equality of conditions produces three things:

1. It isolates men from one another, prevents the reciprocal action of their intelligence and allows their minds to diverge in all directions.

2. It gives to nearly all men the same needs, the same interests, the same sights, so that in the long run, without knowing it or wanting it, they find themselves having on a host of points the same ideas and the same tastes.

3. It creates the *moral* power of the majority (I saw in another place its political power). Man, feeling very weak, seeing around him only beings equally weak and similar to him, the idea of the collective intelligence of his fellows easily overwhelms him. That gives to common opinion a power over minds that it never attains to the same degree among aristocratic peoples. Among the latter, where there are individuals very enlightened, very learned, very powerful due to their intelligence and a crowd of others very ignorant, very limited, you readily trust the superior reason of a man, but you believe little in the infallibility of the mass. It is the time of prophets.

Faith in common opinion is the faith of democratic nations. The majority is the prophet; you believe it without reasoning. You follow it confidently without discussion. It exerts an immense pressure on individual intelligence. The moral dominion of the majority is perhaps called to replace religions to a certain point or to perpetuate certain ones of them, if it protects them. But then religion would live more like common opinion than like religion. Its strength would be more borrowed than its own. All this can be supported by the example of the Americans.

Men will never be able to deepen all their ideas by themselves. That is contrary to their limited nature. The most (illegible word) and the most free genius believes a million things on the faith of others. So *moral authority* no matter what you do must be found somewhere in the moral world. Its place is variable, but a place is necessary for it. Man needs to believe dogmatically a host of things, were it only to have the time to discuss a few others of them. This authority is principally called *religion* in aristocratic centuries. It will perhaps be named *majority* in democratic centuries, or rather *common opinion.*

[In the margin: Somewhere make the state of transition felt in which each person is pulling in his direction and forms purely individual opinions, beliefs, ideas.]

As men become more equal, the disposition to believe in one man decreases, the disposition to believe in the mass increases, and is more and more the opinion that leads the world.

Religion is an authority (illegible word) [prior? (ed.)] to humanity, but manifested by one man or one class of men to all the others, who submit to it. Common opinion is an authority that is not prior to humanity and that is exercised by the generality of men on the individual.

The source of these two authorities is different, but their effects come together.

I know that, among Americans, political laws are such that the majority governs society as a sovereign;[q] that greatly increases the dominion that it naturally exercises over intelligence. For there is nothing more familiar to man than recognizing a superior wisdom in the one who oppresses him.[r]

Common opinion like religion gives ready made beliefs and relieves man from the unbearable and impossible obligation to decide everything each day by himself. These beliefs were originally discussed, but they are no longer discussed and they penetrate minds by a kind of pressure of all on each.

[In the margin: I spoke elsewhere about the political and violent dominion of the majority. Here, I am speaking about its moral and peaceful dominion. To say that.]

It is very difficult to believe that equality does not weaken the first of these authorities, but you can think that it will make up for it in part by the second, and that the moral power of common opinion will be called upon to limit much more than is supposed the errors of individual reason. This will be a change of power rather than a destruction of power (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 8–10).

q. The manuscript says "governs despotically."

r. Of particular causes that can harm the free development and generalization of thought in America./

I showed in the preceding chapter that dogmatic and traditional opinions maintained in the matter of religion limited the innovative mind of the Americans in several directions so to speak. There is another cause perhaps less powerful, but more general that threatens to stop and already hinders the free development of thought in the United States. This cause, which I already pointed out in another part of this work, is nothing other than the (illegible word) power that the majority exercises in America.

A religion is a power whose movements are regulated in advance and that moves within a known sphere, and many people believe that within this sphere its effects are beneficial, and that a dogmatic religion better manages to obtain the desirable effects of a religion than one that is rational. The majority is a (illegible word) power that moves in a way haphazardly and can spread successively to everything. Religion is law, the omnipotence of the majority is arbitrariness.

Religion leads the human mind to stop by itself and makes obedience the free choice of a moral and independent being.

The majority forces the human mind to stop, despite what they have [*sic*] and by forcing it constantly to obey ends by taking away from it even the desire to be free to act for itself.

In the United States, the pernicious influence that omnipotence of the majority exercises over thought makes itself noticeable above all in politics. It is principally on political questions that public opinion has formed until now; but the laws of the Americans are such that the majority, in whatever direction it decided to head, would

make its omnipotence equally felt. Its own will and not the constitution of the country limits it.

You cannot hide from the fact that the Americans have, in that, allowed themselves to be carried away by the usual tendency of democratic peoples. In democracies, whatever you think, the majority and the power that represents it are always provided with a rough power and no matter how little the laws favor instead of combat this tendency, it is nearly impossible to say where the limits of tyranny will be. Now, despotism, whoever imposes it, always produces a kind of dullness of the human mind. Freed from the opinions of family and of class, the human mind bends itself to the will of the greatest number. I say that among purely aristocratic peoples the interest of class, the habits of family, the customs of profession, the maxims of the State . . . form as so many barriers that enclose within them the imagination of man.

If in place of these (two illegible words) that hinder and slow the progress of the human mind, democratic peoples substituted the uncontrolled power of the majority, it is easy to see that the evil would only have changed character. You could say that the human mind is oppressed in another way, but you could not maintain that it is free. Men would not have found the means to live independently; they would only have discovered, a difficult thing, a new mode of servitude.

In aristocracies the power that curbs the imagination of man is one and the prejudices of all types that are born and maintained within an aristocracy take certain paths and prevent the imagination from proceeding in that direction, but they do [not (ed.)] attack intellectual liberty in its principle and in an absolute way; in democracies constituted in the manner that I spoke about above, the majority hangs in a way over the human mind, it curbs in a permanent and general way all its springs of action and by means of bending men to its will ends by taking away from each one of them the habit and the taste *to think* for themselves. So it could happen, if you were not careful, that democracy, under the dominion of certain laws, would harm the liberty of *thought* that the democratic social state favors, and after escaping from the interests of class and the traditions of family the human mind would chain itself to the will of the greatest number.

I think that is something that should make all those who see in human liberty a holy thing and who do not hate the despot, but despotism, reflect deeply. For me, when I feel the hand of power pressing on my head, knowing who is oppressing me matters little to me [and I (ed.)] do not feel more inclined to (illegible word) [put (ed.)] my head in the yoke because a million hands present it to me.

[two illegible lines]

I say that among democratic peoples I clearly notice two contrary tendencies. One leads men toward new and general thoughts, the other could reduce them, so to speak, to not thinking.

So if I found myself suddenly charged with giving laws to a democratic people, I would try to distinguish these two tendencies clearly and make them not cancel each other out or at least make it so that the second does not become preponderant. With

This political omnipotence of the majority in the United States increases, in fact, the influence that the opinions of the public would have without it on the mind of each citizen there; but it does not establish it. The sources of this influence must be sought in equality itself, and not in

this purpose, I would attempt not to destroy the dominion of the majority, but to moderate its use and I would work hard to get it to limit itself after overturning all rival powers. In this way, in order to provide not a complete picture but an example, if I lived among a democratic people, I would prefer to see it adopt the monarchical constitution rather than the republican form, I would prefer that you instituted two legislative assemblies rather than one, an irremovable judiciary rather than elected magistrates, provincial powers rather than a centralized administration. For all of these institutions can be combined with democracy, without altering its essence. As the social state becomes more democratic I would attach more value to gaining all or a few of these things, and by acting in this way I would have in view not only, as I said in another part of this work, to save political liberty, but also to protect the general progress of the human mind. If you say that such maxims will not be popular, I will attempt to console myself with the hope that they are true.

I understand that you serve the cause of democracy, but I want you to do so as a moral and independent being who retains the use of his liberty even as he lends his support. That you see in the majority the most bearable of all powers, I understand, but I would like you to be its counselor and not its courtier, and I would want you to say to it just as Massillon said to the young king, Louis XV, Sire [interrupted text (ed.)]" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 33–42).

The library of the Tocqueville château contained a 1740 edition, in five volumes, of the sermons of Massillon. Tocqueville is perhaps referring to the following passage from the second part of the sermon on the Incarnation:

> The liberty, Sire, that princes owe to their peoples is the liberty of laws. You are the master of the life and the fortune of your subjects; but you can dispose of them only according to the laws. You know only God alone above you, it is true; but the laws must have more authority than yourself. You do not command slaves, you command a free and quarrelsome nation, as jealous of liberty as of its liberty.

Another note mentions:

"Chap. II. Of the particular causes that can harm the free development and the generalization of thought in America.

The pieces of Massillon, on which you can draw, are found:

Petit carême. 1. Sermon of Palm Sunday, first and third part. 2. Sermon of the Incarnation, second part.

You could still look for and, in any case, knit together separate sentences. There would be nothing improper about that" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 33).

the more or less popular institutions that equal men can give themselves. It is to be believed that the intellectual dominion of the greatest number would be less absolute among a democratic people subject to a king, than within a pure democracy; but it will always be very absolute, and, whatever the political laws may be that govern men in centuries of equality, you can predict that faith in common opinion will become a sort of religion whose prophet will be the majority.

Thus intellectual authority will be different, but it will not be less; and, far from believing that it must disappear, I foresee that it would easily become too great and that it might well be that it would finally enclose the action of individual reason within more narrow limits than are suitable for the grandeur and happiness of the human species. I see very clearly in equality two tendencies: one that leads the mind of each man toward new thoughts and the other that readily reduces him to thinking no more. And I notice how, under the dominion of certain laws, democracy would extinguish the intellectual liberty that the democratic social state favors, so that after breaking all the obstacles that were formerly imposed on it by classes or men, the human mind would bind itself narrowly to the general wills of the greatest number [*volontés générales du plus grand nombre*—Trans.].[s]

If, in place of all the diverse powers that hindered or slowed beyond measure the rapid development of individual reason, democratic peoples substituted the absolute power of a majority, the evil would only have changed character. Men would not have found the means to live independently; they would only have discovered, a difficult thing, a new face of servitude. I cannot say it enough: for those who see liberty of the mind as

s. Liberty and authority will always divide the intellectual world into two parts. These two parts will be more or less unequal depending on the centuries./

Authority can be exercised in the name of one certain power or in the name of another; but authority itself will continue to exist.

[In the margin: If men had only dogmatic beliefs, they would remain immobile. If they had only non-dogmatic beliefs, they would live in an ineffectual agitation. On the one hand, despotism; on the other, anarchy.] (*Rubish,* 1).

a holy thing, and who hate not only the despot but also despotism, there is in that something to make them reflect deeply. For me, when I feel the hand of power pressing on my head, knowing who is oppressing me matters little to me, and I am no more inclined to put my head in the yoke, because a million arms present it to me.

CHAPTER 3[a]

Why the Americans Show More Aptitude and Taste for General Ideas Than Their Fathers the English

God does not consider the human species in general. He sees at a single glance and separately all the beings who make up humanity, and he notices

a. 1. What is the strength and the weakness of general ideas. Result greater, less exact.

2. That general ideas arise principally from enlightenment.

3. This is not sufficient to explain why the Americans and above all the French, who are not more enlightened than the English, show much more aptitude and taste for general ideas than the latter.

Apart from the common cause of enlightenment, these other causes must therefore be recognized:

1. When men are (illegible word) [similar? (ed.)] their similarity leads them to conceive ideas about themselves applicable to the entire species, which gives them the habit and the taste for general ideas in all things.

2. Men being equal and weak, you do not see individuals who force them to march along the same path. So a great cause must be imagined that acts separately but in the same way on each one of them. That also leads to general ideas.

3. When men have escaped from the spirit of class, profession, (illegible word) in order to search for truth by themselves, they are led to study the very nature of man. New form of general idea.

4. All men of democracies are very busy practically. That gives them a great taste for general ideas, which produce great results in little time.

5. Writers of democratic centuries, like all the other men of those centuries, want quick successes and present enjoyments. That leads them vigorously toward general ideas.

4. Also, aristocratic peoples do not esteem general ideas enough and do not make enough use of them; democratic peoples are always ready to abuse them and to become excessively impassioned about them (YTC, CVf, pp. 3–5).

each of them with the similarities that bring each closer to the others and the differences that isolate each.

So God does not need general ideas; that is to say he never feels the necessity to encompass a very great number of analogous objects within the same form in order to think about them more comfortably.

It is not so with man. If the human mind undertook to examine and to judge individually all the particular cases that strike it, it would soon be lost amid the immensity of details and would no longer see anything; in this extremity, it resorts to an imperfect, but necessary procedure that helps its weakness and proves it.[b]

b. The human mind naturally has the taste for general ideas because its soul is an emanation of God, the most generalizing being in the universe. So it is only by a kind of constraint that you keep the human mind contemplating particular cases. And if it sees a way to escape by some path, it rushes in that direction; and, the more restrained it is in all the other directions, the more violently it does so.

That is why when aristocratic societies become enlightened without yet ceasing to be aristocratic, you find minds who force their bonds and, in a way losing sight of earth, go far away from the real world in order to create the most general principles in matters of politics, morality, and philosophy.

During this time real society continues to follow its routine existence; and while castes, professions, religions, fortunes divide and classify men, interests, ideas, an entirely imaginary society is in a way built in the air outside of real society; it is an entirely imaginary society in which the human (illegible word) [v: mind], no longer limited by the desire for application, subjects everything to general principles and common rules.

So you must not judge the state of a people by a few adventurous minds that appear within it. For it could happen that they might be all the more given to generalizing the less the people itself is given to doing so, and that the impossibility of establishing anything that pleases them in the real world might be what pushes them so energetically into entirely imaginary regions. I doubt that More would have written his *Utopia* if he had been able to realize a few of his dreams in the government of England, and I think that the Germans of today would not abandon themselves with so much passion to the search for general truth in philosophy if they were allowed to generalize a few of their ideas in politics.

When some men put forward very general ideas, it is not proof therefore that the social state is already democratic; it is only an indication that it is beginning to become so.

But if you find among an entire people a visible tendency to apply the same rules to everything, if you see it, while still remaining in the practical and the real, try hard to extend the same moral, intellectual, political condition to all men at once, do not

After considering a certain number of matters superficially and noticing that they are alike, the human mind gives them all the same name, puts them aside and goes on its way.

General ideas do not attest to the strength of human intelligence, but rather to its insufficiency, for there are no beings exactly the same in nature: no identical facts; no rules applicable indiscriminately and in the same way to several matters at once.[c]

hesitate any longer and say without fear that here the revolution is accomplished, and it is from now on no longer a matter of destroying democracy, but only of regulating it.

The state of slavery in which the woman lives among savage tribes, her complete separation from men and her imprisonment among Orientals, her inferiority and more or less great subjugation among the civilized peoples of Europe can provide arguments about what I have said concerning the intellectual effects of aristocracy.

The aristocracy of sex is the most natural, the most complete and the most universal that is known. And the greater and more exclusive it is, the more it tends to specialize and to (illegible word) the circle of human ideas.

In the Orient there are the thoughts of men and the thoughts of women. In Europe you imagine ideas that apply at the same time to the two types that compose the human species.

By mixing the sexes in activities and in pleasures you thus give to the intelligence of men and of women something more daring and more general.

That also suffices to explain well the differences that are noticeable in the march of intelligence in the west and in the east (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 27–29).

Cf. conversation with Clark of 9 August 1833 (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 25).

c. Earlier version in a rough draft:

. . . at once. When man says that something is, he assumes a fact that he knows does not exist but that he uses, lacking anything better; he leaves better clarification for later when he has the time, just as the algebraist expresses by "a" or by "b" certain quantities whose value he will examine later (three illegible words).

So general ideas are only means by the aid of which men advance toward truth, but without ever finding it. You can even say that, to a certain extent, by following this path they are moving away from it.

For if they limited themselves to examining certain matters individually they (two illegible words) the former, while by considering them together he cannot have anything except a confused and inexact idea of everything.

General ideas are not any less the most powerful instruments of thought, but you must know how to use them.

That men often form general ideas out of laziness as much as out of weakness and need (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 15).

General ideas are admirable in that they allow the human mind to make rapid judgements about a great number of matters at the same time; but, on the other hand, they never provide it with anything other than incomplete notions, and they always make it lose in exactitude what it gains in breadth.

As societies grow older, they acquire knowledge of new facts and each day, almost without knowing it, they take hold of a few particular truths.

As man grasps more truths of this nature, he is naturally led to conceive a greater number of general ideas. You cannot see a multitude of particular facts separately, without finally discovering the common bond that holds them together. Several individuals make the notion of the species emerge; several species lead necessarily to that of the genus. So the older and more extensive the enlightenment of a people, the greater will always be their habit of and taste for general ideas.

But there are still other reasons that push men to generalize their ideas or move them away from doing so.

The Americans make much more frequent use than the English of general ideas and delight much more in doing so; that seems very strange at first, if you consider that these two peoples have the same origin, that they lived for centuries under the same laws and that they still constantly communicate their opinions and their mores to one another. The contrast seems even much more striking when you concentrate your attention on our Europe and compare the two most enlightened peoples that live there.[d]

d. It is possible that certain .-.-.- a natural genius that leads them to generalize their ideas. Great writers have said so and yet I still doubt it. I see nothing in the physical constitution of man that disposes him to one order of ideas rather than to another, and nothing in historical facts leads me to believe that this particular disposition of the mind is inherent in one of the human races rather than in the others. I see that the peoples most avid for general ideas and the best disposed to discern them have not always shown the same taste for seeking them and the same facility for discerning them. So I reject a reason that analysis cannot grasp and that, supposedly applicable to all times, explains only what is happening today (*Rubish,* 1).

You would say that among the English the human mind tears itself away from the contemplation of particular facts only with regret and pain in order to return from there to causes, and that the human mind generalizes only in spite of itself.

It seems, on the contrary, that among us the taste for general ideas has become a passion so unrestrained that it must be satisfied in the slightest thing. I learn each morning upon waking that a certain general and eternal law has just been discovered that I had never heard of until then [and <I am assured> that I obey with all the rest of my fellows some primary causes of which I was unaware]. There is no writer so mediocre for whom it is enough in his essay to discover truths applicable to a great kingdom and who does not remain discontent with himself if he has not been able to contain humanity within the subject of his discourse.[e]

e. There are several causes that make men form general ideas.

A man by dint of research discovers numerous and new connections among diverse matters, beings, facts, . . . and he draws a general idea from it.

Another discovers a certain number of connections among other matters. He knows that the general idea that these connections (illegible word) bring forth is inexact, but he wants to go further and he uses it as an imperfect means that nonetheless helps him reach the truth.

These are the learned, considered, philosophical ways to create general ideas. General ideas created in this way attest to the vigor of the human mind.

But most men do not set about doing it in this way. After an inattentive and short examination, they believe they have discovered a common connection among certain matters. To continue research is long and tiresome. To examine in detail if the matters that you are comparing are truly alike and to what degree would be difficult. So you hasten to pronounce. If you considered most of the general ideas that are current among men you would see that most do not attest to the vigor of the human mind, but to its laziness.

[In the margin] Men do in the matter of government what they do in the fact of language. They notice at first only particular cases, then when they begin to know general ideas, they want to generalize too much; as they become more learned, they complicate their sciences and establish classifications, distinctions that they had not at first noticed. Thus with government. The idea of centralization belongs to the middle age of human intelligence (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 16–17).

And in the *rubish* of the end of volume IV:

The man who puts forth general ideas is exposed to two great dangers from the perspective of criticism.

Such a dissimilarity between two very enlightened peoples astonishes me. If finally I turn my mind toward England and notice what has been happening for half a century within that country, I believe I am able to assert that the taste for general ideas is developing there as the ancient constitution of the country is becoming weaker.

So the more or less advanced state of enlightenment alone is not sufficient to explain what suggests love of general ideas to the human mind or turns it away from them.

When conditions are very unequal, and inequalities are permanent, individuals become little by little so dissimilar that you would say that there are as many distinct humanities as there are classes; you see only one of them at a time, and, losing sight of the general bond that gathers all within the vast bosom of the human species, you envisage only certain men and not man.

So those who live in these aristocratic societies never conceive very general ideas relative to themselves, and that suffices to give them a habitual distrust of these ideas, and an instinctive disgust for them.

The man who inhabits democratic countries, on the contrary, sees near

He is exposed to the danger common to all those who put forth ideas which is that they are false and it is noticed. He is also exposed to another danger which is particular to the subject.

The more general an idea (and I suppose it true as well as general), the more it allows particular cases to escape. A very great number of particular cases opposed to a general idea would prove that the idea is false, but a few particular cases do not prove it. The one who raises against the maker of a general idea a certain number of particular cases does not therefore prove absolutely that this idea is false, but he advances the beginning of embarrassing [doubtful reading (ed.)] evidence.

Now, since this beginning of evidence exists against all general ideas true or false, it is like a weapon at the disposal of all narrow or ill-intentioned minds. General ideas can be appreciated in a competent manner only by very enlightened and very impartial minds. There is the evil.

Special ideas leave less room for partiality and require much less enlightenment in those who judge them" (*Rubish,* 2, in a jacket belonging to the bundle of the last part that is entitled SOME RUBISH THAT DO NOT FALL INTO ONE SECTION OF THIS CHAPTER RATHER THAN INTO ANOTHER).

him only more or less similar beings; so he cannot consider whatever part of the human species, without having his thought widen and expand to embrace the whole. All the truths that are applicable to himself seem to him to apply equally or in the same way to each one of his fellow citizens and of his fellow men.[f] Having contracted the habit of general ideas in the one area of his studies that concerns him most and that interests him more, he transfers this same habit to all the others, and this is how the need to find common rules in everything, to encompass a great number of matters within the same form, and to explain an ensemble of facts by a sole cause, becomes an ardent and often blind passion of the human mind.[g]

Nothing shows the truth of what precedes better than the opinions of antiquity relative to slaves.

The most profound and far-reaching geniuses of Rome and of Greece were never able to reach this idea so general, but at the same time so simple,

f. In democracies, since men are all more or less equal and similar to each other, subject to sensations little different, and provided with analogous ideas, it is nearly always found that what is applicable to one is applicable at the same time and in the same way to all the others.

So democratic nations are led naturally and so to speak without wanting to be toward conceiving general ideas in what interests them the most, which is themselves. They thus contract the general taste for generalization of ideas and carry it into all the inquiries of the mind.

In this way the smallest democratic people will be closer to searching for and finding the general rights that belong to the human species than the greatest nation whose social state is aristocratic.

There is only a step for the human mind between believing that all the citizens of a small republic must be free and considering that each man has an equal right to liberty (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 22–23).

g. The Americans are a democratic people who since its birth was able to act in all ways; the French form a democratic people who for a long time was able only to think. Now I know nothing that leads men more vigorously toward general theories than a social state that disposes them naturally to discover new ideas and a political constitution that forbids them from rectifying these ideas by practice and from testing them by experience.

In this sense, I think that the institutions of democracy prudently introduced are, everything considered, the best remedy that you can set against the errors of the democratic mind (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 71).

of the similarity of men and of the equal right to liberty that each one of them bears by birth; and they struggled hard to prove that slavery was in nature and that it would always exist. Even more, everything indicates that those of the ancients who had been slaves before becoming free, several of whom have left us beautiful writings, themselves envisaged servitude in the same way.

All the great writers of antiquity were part of the aristocracy of masters, or at least they saw this aristocracy established without dispute before their eyes; so their minds, after expanding in several directions, were limited in that one, and Jesus Christ had to come to earth in order to make it understood that all members of the human species were naturally similar and equal.[h]

In centuries of equality, all men are independent of each other, isolated and weak; you see none whose will directs the movements of the crowd in

h. Proofs of the limits that the classification of ranks puts on the free development of thought.

Plato and Aristotle were born in the middle of democratic republics. Cicero saw the greatest part of the human species gathered under the same laws. These are ample reasons that should have made general thoughts come to the mind of these great men. Neither those men, however, nor any other of antiquity was able to discover the so simple idea of the equal right to liberty that each man [has (ed.)] by birth.

The slavery that has not existed for so many centuries appeared to them in the nature of things, and they seemed to consider it as a necessary and eternal condition of humanity.

Even more, nothing indicates that the men of that time who had been slaves before becoming free and several of whom were great writers, had considered from a different perspective the servitude from which they had suffered so much. How to explain this?

All the ancients who have left us writings were part of the aristocracy of masters, or at least they saw this aristocracy established without dispute among the men of their time. Their minds, so expansive in so many directions, were limited on that one and J[esus (ed.)]. C[hrist (ed.)]. had to come to earth in order to consider the general value of man and to make it understood that similar beings could and must be equal.

When I see Aristotle make the power of Alexander serve the progress of the natural sciences, ransack all of Asia weapons in hand in order to find unknown animals and plants, and when I notice that after studying nature at such great cost he ended up finally by discovering slavery there, I feel myself led to think that man would do better to remain at home, not to study books and to look for truth only in his own heart (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 30–31).

a permanent fashion; in these times, humanity always seems to march by itself. So in order to explain what is happening in the world, you are reduced to searching for some general causes that, acting in the same way on each one of our fellows, therefore lead them all voluntarily to follow the same route. That also naturally leads the human mind to conceive general ideas and causes it to contract the taste for them.

I showed previously how equality of conditions brought each man to search for truth by himself. It is easy to see that such a method must imperceptibly make the human mind tend toward general ideas.

When I repudiate the traditions of class, of profession and of family, when I escape from the rule of example in order, by the sole effort of my reason, to search for the path to follow, I am inclined to draw the grounds of my opinions from the very nature of man, which brings me necessarily and almost without my knowing, toward a great number of very general notions.[j]

Everything that precedes finally explains why the English show much less aptitude and taste for the generalization of ideas than their sons, the Americans, and above all than their neighbors, the French, and why the English today show more of such aptitude and taste than their fathers did.[k]

The English have for a long time been a very enlightened and at the same time very aristocratic people; their enlightenment made them tend constantly toward very general ideas, and their aristocratic habits held them in very particular ideas. From that this philosophy, at the very same time bold

j. In the margin: "≠All this portion seems to me of contestable truth and to delete≠."
k. "The (illegible word) reason for the difference.

"1. In practical life.

"2. The second . . . in physical nature; although I am in general little in favor of arguments based on the physical nature of peoples, I believe nonetheless that I am able to make use of them here" (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 69–70).

and timid, broad and narrow, that dominated in England until now, and that still keeps so many minds there restricted and immobile.[m]

Apart from the causes that I showed above, you find still others, less apparent, but no less effective, that produce among nearly all democratic peoples the taste and often the passion for general ideas.

These sorts of ideas must be clearly distinguished. There are some that are the product of a slow, detailed, conscientious work of intelligence, and those enlarge the sphere of human knowledge.

m. First version in a rough draft:

The English have for a long time been one of the most enlightened and most aristocratic people of the globe. I think that the singularities that you notice in their opinions must be attributed to the combination of these two causes. Their enlightenment made them tend toward general ideas, while their aristocratic habits held them within the circle of particular ideas. From that this philosophy at the very same time bold and timid, broad and narrow, liberated and addicted to routine that characterizes the march of the human mind in England. Certainly, the country that produced the two Bacons, the great Newton {Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham}, that country is not naturally sterile in men who can conceive general ideas and put them within reach of the common people, but these extraordinary men lacked a public. They opened wide roads where they marched alone; mores and laws formed like intellectual barriers that separated their minds from that of the crowd, and if they were able to open their country to new and general ideas in the particular matters that they treated, they did not succeed in giving it the taste for new and general ideas in all matters. The various causes that I have just enumerated can exist without the social state and institutions having yet become democratic, and I do not claim that lacking the auxiliary causes they cannot develop more or less power. I am only saying that democracy places men in a situation favorable to the conception of new and general ideas and that uniting with other causes, it pushes them vigorously toward them. If the Americans were neither enlightened nor free, I doubt that they would have very general and very bold ideas, but I am sure that their social state coming to be combined with their enlightenment and their liberty has singularly helped them to conceive these sorts of ideas.

[In the margin] There is only one aristocracy in America, that of skin. See the consequences: more *narrow* ideas . . ." (YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 80–81).

You find a variant of this fragment in YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 31–32, where Tocqueville adds (p. 32): "In America there is less freedom of mind in the slave countries. Among equal men, there cannot be lasting classification."

There are others that arise easily from a first rapid effort of the mind, and that lead only to very superficial and very uncertain notions.

Men who live in centuries of equality have a great deal of curiosity and little leisure; their life is so practical, so complicated, so agitated, so active, that little time remains for them to think. The men of democratic centuries love general ideas, because they exempt them from studying particular cases; they contain, if I can express myself in this way, many things within a small volume and in little time produce a great result. So when, after an inattentive and short examination, they believe they notice among certain matters a common relationship, they push their research no further, and, without examining in detail how these diverse matters are similar or different, they hasten to arrange them according to the same formula, in order to move on.

One of the distinctive characteristics of democratic centuries is the taste that all men there feel for easy success and present enjoyments. This is found in intellectual careers as in all others. Most of those who live in times of equality are full of an ambition intense and soft at the same time; they want to gain great successes immediately, but they would like to excuse themselves from great efforts. These opposing instincts lead them directly to the search for general ideas, by the aid of which they flatter themselves to portray very vast matters at little cost, and to attract the attention of the public without difficulty.

And I do not know if they are wrong to think this way; for their readers are as much afraid to go deeper as they themselves are and ordinarily seek in the works of the mind only easy pleasures and instruction without work.

If aristocratic nations do not make enough use of general ideas and often show them an ill-considered scorn, it happens, on the contrary, that democratic peoples are always ready to abuse these sorts of ideas and to become impassioned excessively for them.[n]

n. In the margin: "I believe that in this matter what can be said most generally true is this."

CHAPTER 4[a]

Why the Americans Have Never Been as Passionate as the French about General Ideas in Political Matters

[<I showed in the preceding chapter that equality of conditions suggested to the human mind the taste for general ideas. I do not want to abandon this subject without pointing out here in passing how the great liberty that the Americans enjoy prevents them from giving themselves blindly to this very taste in politics.>]

I said before that the Americans showed a less intense taste than the

a. Chapter 4 (a).[1]

Why the Americans have never been as passionate as the French about political theories.

The Americans have never shown the same passion as the French for political theories.

That comes from the fact that they have always done politics in a practical way. On this point their liberty combatted the excessive taste for general ideas to which their equality, all by itself, would have given birth. This seems contrary to what I said in the preceding chapter, that it was the practical life of democratic peoples that suggested the love of theory to them. These two things are reconciled, however, by means of a distinction.

The busy life of democratic peoples gives them in fact the taste for theories, but not in the thing with which they are occupied.

It is even enough to make them occupy themselves with something in order to make them accept general ideas relative to this thing only after examination (YTC, CVf, pp. 5–6).

1. ≠The chapters marked (a) are those that still leave me most unsatisfied and that must principally attract my attention at a *last* reading≠ (YTC, CVf, p. 1).

In the jacket that contains the manuscript of the chapter: "This chapter leaves me with something to be desired, I do not know what."

French for general ideas. That is above all true for general ideas relative to politics.

Although the Americans introduce infinitely more general ideas into legislation than the English, and although they concern themselves much more than the latter with adjusting the practice of human affairs to the theory, you have never seen in the United States political bodies as in love with general ideas as were our own Constituent Assembly and Convention; never has the entire American nation had a passion for these sorts of ideas in the same way that the French people of the XVIIIth century did, and never has it shown so blind a faith in the goodness and in the absolute truth of any theory.

This difference between the Americans and us arises out of several causes, but principally this one:

The Americans form a democratic people that has always run public affairs by themselves, and we are a democratic people that, for a long time, has only been able to think about the best way to conduct them.

Our social state already led us to conceive very general ideas in matters of government, while our political constitution still prevented us from rectifying these ideas by experience and from discovering little by little their inadequacy; while among the Americans these two things constantly balanced and mutually corrected each other.

It seems, at first view, that this is strongly opposed to what I said previously, that democratic nations drew from the very agitation of their practical life the love that they show for theories. A closer examination reveals that there is nothing contradictory there.[b]

Men who live in democratic countries are very avid for general ideas, because they have little leisure and because these ideas excuse them from wasting their time in examining particular cases; that is true, but it must be extended only to the matters that are not the habitual and necessary

b. "This in not a contradiction, but it is due to the fact that the Americans are not only equal but are republican" (*Rubish,* 1).

object of their thoughts.[c] Tradesmen will grasp eagerly and without looking very closely all the general ideas that are presented to them relative to philosophy, politics, the sciences and the arts; but they will accept only after examination those that have to do with commerce and accept them only with reservation.

The same thing happens to statesmen, when it is a matter of general ideas relative to politics.

So when there is a subject on which it is particularly dangerous for democratic peoples to give themselves to general ideas blindly and beyond measure, the best corrective that you can employ is to make them concern themselves with it every day and in a practical way; then it will be very necessary for them to enter into details, and the details will make them see the weak aspects of the theory.

c. Let us consider Germany.

The human mind there shows itself excessively (illegible word) and generalizing as regards philosophy and above all metaphysics, regular and specialized, enslaved, in nearly all the rest. What causes that?

In America, on the contrary, where the human mind is regular as regards philosophy, it is bold and generalizing in all the rest.

Wouldn't the result be that equality of conditions leads to bold and general ideas only in matters of civil and political society and exercises only an imperceptible influence on all the rest?

Or rather isn't there a hidden reason that makes it so that bold and general ideas in philosophy can occur to a mind that does not conceive the others?

Or rather finally must you search for the explanation for all of that in the facts and say:

First of all, that it is not correct that in the United States the common mind is routine as regards philosophy. If you give the name philosophy to the principles that direct human actions, even if the principles were not reduced to theory and science, the Americans certainly have a philosophy and even a very new and very bold philosophy.

Secondly, equality of conditions is already very great; that the philosophical movement that you are speaking about has above all been noticeable since a half-century ago when equality of conditions really came about. That its consequences come about only in philosophy because it is suppressed by force everywhere else and that it brings them about all the more vigorously there because it can bring them about only there. Philosophy is in fact only the complete exercise of thought, separate from the practice of action (YTC, CVa, pp. 36–37).

See the first chapter of book III of the *Old Regime* (*OC,* II, 1, pp. 193–201), where, using the same reasoning, Tocqueville explains the appearance of the French pre-revolutionary intellectuals and their passion for general ideas in politics.

The remedy is often painful, but its effect is certain.

In this way democratic institutions, which force each citizen to be occupied in a practical way with government, moderate the excessive taste for general theories in political matters that equality suggests.[d]

d. Usefulness of varying the means of government. Ideas too general as regards government are a sign of weakness in the human mind, like ideas too particular. Belonging to the middle age of intelligence. Danger of allowing a single social principle to take without objection the absolute direction of society.

General idea that I wanted to make emerge from this work.

[In the margin: Perhaps use here the piece on general ideas.]

.-.-.-.-.-.-.- men ordinarily {judge} ideas much more perfect, more effective and more beautiful in proportion to their being more simple, and that it [*sic*] can be reduced much more easily to a single fact.

This judgment arises in part from our weakness. Complications tire the human mind, and it willingly rests [v: with a kind of pride] in the idea of a single cause producing by itself alone an infinity of great effects. If however we cast our eyes on the work of the being par excellence, of the creator of man, of his eternal model, of God, we are surprised by the strange complications that present themselves to our sight. We are obliged to renounce our (illegible word) of beauty and to place perfection in the grandeur of the result and not in the simplicity of the means.

God ties together a multitude of bones, muscles, nerves, each of which has a separate and distinct function. The first elements are themselves the products of a multitude of primary causes. In the middle of this machine so complicated, he places an intelligence that resides there without being part of it. An invisible bond unites all these things and makes them all work toward a unique end. This assemblage feels, thinks, acts, it is man, it is the king of the world after the one who created it.

The same diversity is found in all the works of the Creator. . . .

Man himself is only a means, among the millions of means that God uses to reach the great end that he proposes, the government of the universe. God indicates as much to us. .-.-.-.- great results can be obtained only with the help of a great diversity of efforts, with variety of chosen means. If your machine can function as well with one wheel as with two, only make one; but make ten if that is useful for the object that you have in view. If the machine thus composed produces what you must expect from it, it is no less beautiful than if it were simpler.

The error of men comes from believing that you can produce very great things with very simple means. If you could do it, they would be right to put the idea of beauty partially in the simplicity of means.

[v: So God, if I can express myself in this way, puts the idea of grandeur and perfection not in executing a great number of things with the help of a single means, but in making a multitude of diverse means contribute to the perfect execution of a single thing.]

Theoretical .-.-.-.-.- have more connection to practice than you think. This opinion

that you can achieve a very great result with the help of a single means and that you should aim for that, this opinion applied to the matter of government has exercised a strange and fatal influence on the fate of humanity. It has singularly facilitated and still facilitates every day the establishment of despotism on the earth. What is more simple than (illegible word) organized government of a (illegible word)? What is more complicated than liberty?

If men had enough strength of mind to combine easily a great number of means, they would succeed better in this way.

It is their weakness and not their strength that leads them to the idea of (illegible word).

Not able to do something very well with a great number of means, they hope to do it more or less well with the help of one single means.

The human mind, not being able to coordinate a great number of means, got the idea that it was glorious to employ only a single one of them (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 37–41).

CHAPTER 5[a]

How, in the United States, Religion Knows How to Make Use of Democratic Instincts[b]

a. 1. I showed that dogmatic beliefs were necessary; the most necessary and the most desirable are dogmatic beliefs in the matter of religion. Reasons to believe.

[In the margin: To change the title. Put one that places it more clearly under the rubric of ideas and operations of the mind.]

1. Fixed ideas on God and human nature are necessary to *all* men and *every* day to *each* man, and it is found that there are only a few, if any, men who are capable by themselves of fixing their ideas on these matters. It is a science necessary to all at each moment and inaccessible to the greatest number. That is unique. So it is in these matters that there is the most to gain and the least to lose by having dogmatic beliefs.

2. These beliefs particularly necessary to free peoples.

3. Id. to democratic peoples.

2. So I am led to seek *humanly* how religions could most easily assert themselves during the centuries of equality that we are entering.

Development of this:

1. Necessity that religions be based on the idea of a *unique* being imposing at the *same* time the *same* rules on *each* man.

2. Necessity of extricating religion from forms, practices, figures, as men become more democratic.

3. Necessity of not insisting on remaining immobile in secondary things.

4. Necessity of trying to purify and regulate the love of well-being, without attempting to destroy it.

5. Necessity of gaining the favor of the majority.

3. All this proved by the example of America (YTC, CVf, pp. 6–7).

b. Twice there must be the question of religion in this book.

1. The first *principally* in a separate chapter placed I think after the first in which I would examine *philosophically* the influence of democracy on religions.

I established in one of the preceding chapters that men cannot do without dogmatic beliefs, and that it was even much to be desired that they had such beliefs. I add here that, among all dogmatic beliefs, the most desirable seem to me to be dogmatic beliefs in the matter of religion; that very clearly follows, even if you want to pay attention only to the interests of this world alone.

[≠Religions have the advantage that they provide the human mind with the clear and precise answer to a very great number of questions.≠]

There is hardly any human action, no matter how particular you assume it to be, that is not born out of a very general idea that men have conceived of God, of God's relationships with humanity, of the nature of their soul and of their duties toward their fellows. You cannot keep these ideas from being the common source from which all the rest flows.[c]

[Experience has proved that they were necessary to all men and that each man needed them daily in order to solve the smallest problems of his existence.]

So men have an immense interest in forming very fixed ideas about God, their soul, their general duties toward their creator and toward their fellows; for doubt about these first points would leave all their actions to chance and would condemn them in a way to disorder and impotence.

So this matter is the one about which it is most important for each one of us to have fixed ideas, and unfortunately it is also the one on which it is most difficult for each person, left to himself and by the sole effort of his reason, to come to fix his ideas.

Only minds very emancipated from the ordinary preoccupations of life,

2. The second *incidentally* somewhere in the second volume where I would say more oratorically how it is indispensable in democracies in order to immaterialize man (*Rubish,* 1).

See Agnès Antoine, "Politique et religion chez Tocqueville," in Laurence Guellec, *Tocqueville et l'esprit de la démocratie* ([Paris:] Presses de Sciences Po, 2005), pp. 305–17; and also by the same author, *L'impensé de la démocratie* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

c. In the margin: "<What is most important is not so much that they are correct, it is that they are clear and fixed.>"

very perceptive, very subtle, very practiced are able with the help of a great deal of time and care to break through to such necessary truths.

Yet we see that these philosophers themselves are almost always surrounded by uncertainties; at each step the natural light that illumines them grows dark and threatens to go out, and despite all their efforts they still have been able to discover only a small number of contradictory notions, in the middle of which the human mind has drifted constantly for thousands of years, unable to grasp the truth firmly or even to find new errors. Such studies are far beyond the average capacity of men, and, even if most men were capable of devoting themselves to such studies, it is clear that they would not have the leisure to do so.

Fixed ideas about God and human nature are indispensable for the daily practice of their life, and this practice prevents them from being able to acquire those ideas.

That seems unique to me. Among the sciences, there are some, useful to the crowd, that are within its grasp; others are only accessible to a few persons and are not cultivated by the majority, which needs only the most remote of their applications. But the daily practice of this science is indispensable to all, even though its study is inaccessible to the greatest number.

General ideas relative to God and to human nature are, therefore, among all ideas, those most suitable to remove from the habitual action of individual reason, and for which there is the most to gain and the least to lose by recognizing an authority.

The first object, and one of the principal advantages of religions, is to provide for each of these primordial questions a clear, precise answer, intelligible to the crowd and very enduring.

There are very false and very absurd religions. You can say however that every religion that remains within the circle that I have just pointed out and that does not claim to go outside of it, as several have tried to do in order to stop the free development of the human mind in all directions, imposes a salutary yoke on the intellect; and it must be recognized that, if religion does not save men in the other world, it is at least very useful to their happiness and to their grandeur in this one.

This is above all true of men who live in free countries.

When religion is destroyed among a people, doubt takes hold of the

highest portions of the intellect and half paralyzes all the others. Each person gets accustomed to having only confused and changing notions about the matters that most interest his fellows and himself. You defend your opinions badly or you abandon them, and, since you despair of being able, by yourself, to solve the greatest problems that human destiny presents, you are reduced like a coward to not thinking about them.

Such a state cannot fail to enervate souls; it slackens the motivating forces of will and prepares citizens for servitude.

Then not only does it happen that the latter allow their liberty to be taken, but they often give it up.

When authority no longer exists in religious matters, any more than in political matters, men are soon frightened by the sight of this limitless independence. This perpetual agitation [<and this continual mutation>] of all things disturbs and exhausts them. Since everything shifts in the intellectual world, they at least want everything to be firm and stable in the material order, and, no longer able to recapture their ancient beliefs, they give themselves a master.

For me, I doubt that man can ever bear complete religious independence and full political liberty at the same time; and I am led to think that, if he does not have faith, he must serve, and, if he is free, he must believe.

I do not know, however, if this great utility of religions is not still more visible among peoples where conditions are equal, than among all others.

It must be recognized that equality, which introduces great advantages into the world, nevertheless suggests, as will be shown below, very dangerous instincts to men; it tends to isolate them from one another and to lead each one of them to be interested only in himself alone.

It opens their souls excessively to love of material enjoyments.

The greatest advantage of religions is to inspire entirely opposite instincts. There is no religion that does not place the object of the desires of men above and beyond the good things of the earth, and that does not naturally elevate his soul toward realms very superior to those of the senses. Nor is there any religion that does not impose on each man some duties toward the human species or in common with it, and that does not in this way drag him, from time to time, out of contem-

plation of himself. This is found in the most false and most dangerous religions.

So religious peoples are naturally strong precisely in the places where democratic peoples are weak; this makes very clear how important it is for men to keep their religion while becoming equal.

I have neither the right nor the will to examine the supernatural means that God uses to make a religious belief reach the heart of man. At this moment I am envisaging religions only from a purely human viewpoint. I am trying to find out how they can most easily retain their dominion in the democratic centuries that we are entering.[d]

I have shown how, in times of enlightenment and equality, the human mind agreed to receive dogmatic beliefs only with difficulty and strongly felt the need to do so only as regards religion [<and dogmatic beliefs are readily adopted in the form of common opinions>]. This indicates first of all that, in those centuries, religions must be more discreet than in all other centuries in staying within the limits that are appropriate to them and must not try to go beyond them; for, by wanting to extend their power beyond religious matters, they risk no longer being believed in any matter. So they must carefully draw the circle within which they claim to stop the human mind, and beyond that circle they must leave the mind entirely free to be abandoned to itself.

Mohammed made not only religious doctrines, but also political maxims, civil and criminal laws, and scientific theories descend from heaven and placed them in the Koran. The Gospel, in contrast, speaks only of the general relationships of men with God and with each other. Beyond that, it teaches nothing and requires no belief in anything. That alone, among

d. "If God allowed me to lift the veil of the future, I would refuse to do so; I would be afraid to see the human race in the hands of clerks and soldiers" (*Rubish,* 1). The same idea appears in another draft: "I would be afraid to see the entire society in the hands of soldiers. A *bureaucratic, military* organization. The soldier and the clerk. Symbol of future society" (YTC, CVa, p. 50). Cf. note a of p. 1245.

a thousand other reasons, is enough to show that the first of these two religions cannot long dominate during times of enlightenment and democracy, whereas the second is destined to reign during these centuries as in all others.[e]

If I continue this same inquiry further, I find that for religions to be able, humanly speaking, to persist in democratic centuries, they must not only carefully stay within the circle of religious matters; their power also depends a great deal on the nature of the beliefs that they profess, on the external forms that they adopt, and on the obligations that they impose.

What I said previously, that equality brings men to very general and very vast ideas, must principally be understood in the matter of religion. Men similar and equal easily understand the notion of a single God, imposing on each one of them the same rules and granting them future happiness at the same cost. The idea of the unity of the human race leads them constantly to the idea of the unity of the Creator, while in contrast men very separate from each other and strongly dissimilar readily come to make as many divinities as there are peoples, castes, classes and families, and to mark out a thousand particular roads for going to heaven.

You cannot deny that Christianity itself has not in some way been sub-

e. Tocqueville explained in a letter to Richard Milnes (Lord Houghton), dated 29 May 1844:

> You seem to me only like Lamartine to have come back from the Orient a bit more Moslem than is suitable. I do not know why some distinguished minds show this tendency today. For my part, I have experienced from my contact with Islam (you know that through Algeria we touch each day on the institutions of Mohammed) entirely opposite effects. As I got to know this religion better, I better understood that from it above all comes the decadence that before our eyes more and more affects the Moslem world. Had Mohammed committed only the mistake of intimately joining a body of civil and political institutions to a religious belief, in a way to impose on the first the immobility that is in the nature of the second, that would have been enough to doom his followers in a given time at first to inferiority and then to inevitable ruin. The grandeur and holiness of Christianity is in contrast to have tried to reign only in the natural sphere of religions, abandoning all the rest to the free movements of the human mind.

With the kind permission of Trinity College, Cambridge (Houghton papers, 25/200).

jected to the influence exercised by the social and political state on religious beliefs.

At the moment when the Christian religion appeared on earth, Providence, which without doubt prepared the world for its coming, had gathered together a great part of the human species, like an immense flock under the scepter of the Caesars. The men who made up this multitude differed a great deal from one another, but they nevertheless had this point in common, they all obeyed the same laws; and each of them was so weak and so small in relation to the greatness of the prince, that they all seemed equal when compared to him.

It must be recognized that this new and particular state of humanity had to dispose men to receive the general truths that Christianity teaches, and it serves to explain the easy and rapid way in which it then penetrated the human mind.[f]

f. The history of religions clearly shows the truth of what I said above that general ideas come easily to the human mind only when a great number of men are placed in an analogous situation.

Since the object of religion is to regulate the relationships that should exist between man and the Creator, there is nothing that seems more natural than general ideas .-.-.-.-.- until the Roman Empire, however, you saw almost as many religions and gods as peoples. The idea of a religious doctrine applicable to all men came only when nearly all men had been subjected in the same manner to the same power.

I would say something more as well. You can conceive that all men should adore the same God, without accepting that all men are equal in the eyes of God. Christianity says these two things. So it is not only based on a general idea but on a very democratic idea, which is an additional nuance. I believe that Christianity comes from God and that it is not a particular state of humanity that gave birth to it; but it is obvious that it had to find great opportunities for spreading at a period when nearly all the human species, like an immense flock, was mixed and mingled under the scepter of the Caesars, and when subjects, whoever they were, were so small in relation to the greatness of the prince, that when you came to compare them to him, the differences that could exist among them seemed nearly imperceptible.

≠You wonder why nearly all the peoples of modern Europe present a physiognomy so similar? It is because the same revolution that occurs within each State among citizens, takes place within the interior of Europe among peoples. Europe forms more and more a democracy of nations; each [nation (ed.)] being nearly equal to the others by its enlightenment, its social state, its laws, it is not surprising that all envisage the

The counter-proof came about after the destruction of the Empire.

The Roman world was then broken so to speak into a thousand pieces; each nation reverted to its original individuality. Soon, within the interior of these nations, ranks became infinitely graduated; races became marked; castes divided each nation into several [enemy] peoples. In the middle of this common effort that seemed to lead human societies to subdivide themselves into as many fragments as it was possible to imagine, Christianity did not lose sight of the principal general ideas that it had brought to light. But it seemed nonetheless to lend itself, as much as it could, to the new tendencies given birth by the splitting up of the human species. Men continued to adore only a single God, creator and sustainer of all things; but each people, each city, and so to speak each man believed in the ability to gain some separate privilege and to create particular protectors next to the sovereign master. Not able to divide Divinity, his agents at least were multiplied and enlarged beyond measure; the homage due to angels and saints became for most Christians a nearly idolatrous worship, and it could be feared at one time that the Christian religion was regressing toward the religions that it had vanquished.

It seems clear to me that the more the barriers that separated nations within humanity and citizens within the interior of each people tend to disappear, the more the human mind heads as if by itself toward the idea of a single and omnipotent being, dispensing equally and in the same way the same laws to each man. So particularly in these centuries of democracy, it is important not to allow the homage given to secondary agents to be confused with the worship due only to the Creator.

[So you can foresee in advance that every religion in a democratic century that comes to establish intermediary powers between God and men and indicates certain standards of conduct to certain men will come to clash

same matters in the same way.≠ (*Rubish,* 1. Another version of the same passage exists in YTC, CVj, 1, pp. 85–87).

In the copy from CVj, 1 (p. 86), next to the third paragraph, in the margin, you read: "Is the social state the result of ideas or are the ideas the result of the social state?"

with the irresistible tendencies of intelligence; it will not acquire authority or will lose the authority that it had acquired at a time when the social state suggested opposite notions.]

Another truth seems very clear to me; religions must attend less to external practices in democratic times than in all others.

I have shown, in relation to the philosophical method of the Americans, that nothing revolts the human mind more in times of equality than the idea of submitting to forms. Men who live during these times endure representations impatiently; symbols seem to them puerile artifices that you use to veil or keep from their eyes truths that it would be more natural to show them entirely naked and in full light of day; the trappings of ceremonies leave them cold, and they are naturally led to attach only a secondary importance to the details of worship.

Those who are charged with regulating the external form of religions in democratic centuries must pay close attention to these natural instincts of human intelligence, in order not to struggle needlessly against them.

I firmly believe in the necessity of forms;[g] I know that they fix the human mind in the contemplation of abstract truths, and forms, by helping the mind to grasp those truths firmly, make it embrace them with fervor. I do not imagine that it is possible to maintain a religion without external practices, but on the other hand I think that, during the centuries we are entering, it would be particularly dangerous to multiply them inordinately; that instead they must be restricted and that you should retain only those that are absolutely necessary for the perpetuation of the dogma itself, which is the substance of religions,[1] of which worship is only the form. A religion that would become more minutely detailed, more inflexible and more burdened by small observances at the same time that men are becoming more equal, would soon see itself reduced to a troop of passionate zealots in the middle of an unbelieving multitude.

g. The manuscript says: "I do not deny the utility of forms." See note r for p. 1270.

1. *In all religions, there are ceremonies that are inherent in the very substance of belief and that must be carefully kept from changing in any way. That is seen particularly in Catholicism, where form and foundation are often so closely united that they are one.*

I know that some will not fail to object that religions, all having general and eternal truths as their object, cannot bend in this way to the changing instincts of each century, without losing the character of certitude in the eyes of men. I will answer here again that you must distinguish very carefully between the principal opinions that constitute a belief and that form what theologians call the articles of faith, and the incidental notions that are linked to them. Religions are obliged always to hold firm in the first, whatever the particular spirit of the times; but they must very carefully keep from binding themselves in the same way to the second, during centuries when everything changes position constantly and when the mind, accustomed to the moving spectacle of human affairs, reluctantly allows itself to be fixed. Immobility in external and secondary things does not seem to me a possibility for enduring except when civil society itself is immobile; everywhere else, I am led to believe that it is a danger.

We will see that, among all the passions to which equality gives birth or favors, there is one that it makes particularly intense and that it deposits at the same time in the heart of all men; it is the love of well-being. The taste for well-being forms like the salient and indelible feature of democratic ages.

It can be believed that a religion that undertook to destroy this fundamental passion would in the end be destroyed by it; if a religion wanted to drag men away entirely from the contemplation of the good things of this world in order to deliver them solely to the thought of those of the other, you can predict that souls would finally escape from its hands and go far from it to plunge into material and present pleasures alone.

The principal business of religions is to purify, to regulate and to limit the overly ardent and overly exclusive taste for well-being that men feel in times of equality; but I believe that religions would be wrong to try to overcome it entirely and to destroy it. Religions will not succeed in turning men away from love of riches; but they can still persuade them to enrich themselves only by honest means.[h]

h. "I believe religious beliefs necessary for all democratic peoples, but I believe them necessary for the Americans more than for all others. In a society constituted like the American republics, the only non-material conceptions [v: the only non-material tastes] come from religion" (YTC, CVa, p. 5).

This leads me to a final consideration that, in a way, includes all the others. As men become more similar and more equal, it is more important for religions, while still keeping carefully out of the daily movement of affairs, not unnecessarily to go against generally accepted ideas and the permanent interests that rule the mass; for common opinion appears more and more as the first and most irresistible of powers; outside of it there is no support strong enough to allow resistance to its blows for long.[j] That is no less true among a democratic people, subjected to a despot, than in a republic. In centuries of equality, kings often bring about obedience, but it is always the majority that brings about belief; so it is the majority that must be pleased in everything not contrary to faith.

[It would be wrong to attribute only to the Puritan origin of Americans the power that religion retains among them; there are many other causes as well. The object of what precedes was to make the reader better understand the principal ones.][k] I showed, in my first work, how American priests stand aside from public affairs. This is the most striking example, but not the only example, of self-restraint. In America, religion is a world apart where the priest reigns but which he is careful never to leave; within its limits, he leads[m] minds; outside he leaves men to themselves and abandons them to the independence and to the instability that are appropriate to their nature and to the time. I have not seen a country where Christianity was less enveloped by forms, practices and images than in the United States, and where it presented more clear, more simple and more general ideas to the human mind. Although the Christians of America are divided into a

j. "In democratic centuries religion needs the majority, and to gain this majority its genius must not be contrary to the democratic genius" (*Rubish,* 1).

k. I have already pointed out two great causes for the power of religious beliefs in America:

1. The Puritan origin.
2. The separation of church and State.

These two causes are very powerful, but they are not *democratic;* the ones that remain for me are *democratic* (*Rubish,* 1).

m. The manuscript says: "he subjugates."

multitude of sects, they all see their religion from this same perspective. This applies to Catholicism as well as to the other beliefs. There are no Catholic priests who show less taste for small individual observances, extraordinary and particular methods of gaining your salvation [indulgences, pilgrimages and relics], or who are attached more to the spirit of the law and less to its letter than the Catholic priests of the United States; nowhere is the doctrine of the Church that forbids giving the saints the worship that is reserved only for God taught more clearly and followed more. Still, the Catholics of America are very dutiful and very sincere.

Another remark is applicable to the clergy of all communions. American priests do not try to attract and fix the entire attention of man on the future life; they willingly abandon a part of his heart to the cares of the present; they seem to consider the good things of this world as important, though secondary matters. If they themselves do not participate in industry, they are at least interested in its progress and applaud it, and, while constantly pointing out the other world to the faithful man as the great object of his fears and of his hopes, they do not forbid him to seek well-being honestly in this one. Far from showing him how the two things are separate and opposite, they pay particular attention instead to finding in what place they touch and are connected.

All American priests know the intellectual dominion exercised by the majority and respect it. They support only necessary struggles against the majority. They do not get involved in party quarrels, but they willingly adopt the general opinions of their country and their time, and they go along without resistance with the current of sentiments and ideas that carries everything along around them. They try hard to correct their contemporaries, but do not separate from them. So public opinion is never their enemy; instead it sustains and protects them, and their beliefs reign simultaneously with the strengths that are their own and those that they borrow from the majority.

In this way, by respecting all the democratic instincts that are not contrary to it and by using several of those instincts to help itself, religion succeeds in struggling with advantage against the spirit of individual independence that is the most dangerous of all to religion.

CHAPTER 6[a]

Of the Progress of Catholicism in the United States

America is the most democratic country on earth, and at the same time the country where, according to trustworthy reports,[b] the Catholic religion is making the most progress. This is surprising at first view.

Two things must be clearly distinguished. Equality disposes men to want to judge by themselves; but, from another side, it gives them the taste and the idea of a single social power, simple and the same for all. So men who live in democratic centuries are very inclined to avoid all religious authority. But, if they consent to submit to such an authority, they at least want it to be unitary and uniform; religious powers that do not all lead to the same center [or in other words national churches] are naturally shocking to their

a. This chapter, which bears the number Vbis in the manuscript, as well as the one that follows, are not included in the list of notebook CVf. In the manuscript the first title is: HOW THE PROGRESS OF EQUALITY HAS FAVORED THE PROGRESS OF CATHOLICISM.

On the jacket of the manuscript you find this note: "Ask for some figures from Mr. Wash perhaps." Probably this concerns Robert Walsh, American journalist, founder of the *National Gazette.* Tocqueville and Beaumont met him in Philadelphia (George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 475–76, 537).

b. Several conversations with Americans had persuaded Tocqueville of the rapid increase of Catholicism in the United States. This fact has been contested by certain American critics. On this subject, it can be recalled that, in his first letters from America, Tocqueville noted that if the lower classes tended toward Catholicism, the upper classes converted instead to Unitarianism (cf. alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 230–32. YTC, BIIa contains a note on conversions in India copied from the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register,* 4, April 1831, p. 316. It is not reproduced in *Voyage*).

intelligence, and they imagine almost as easily that there is no religion as that there are several.[c]

You see today, more than in earlier periods, Catholics who become unbelievers and Protestants who turn into Catholics. If you consider Catholicism internally, it seems to lose; if you look at it from the outside, it gains. That can be explained.

Men today are naturally little disposed to believe; but as soon as they have a religion, they find a hidden instinct within themselves that pushes them without their knowing toward Catholicism. Several of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church astonish them;[d] but they experience a secret admiration for its government, and its great unity attracts them.

If Catholicism succeeded finally in escaping from the political hatreds to which it gave birth, I hardly doubt that this very spirit of the century, which seems so contrary to it, would become very favorable to it,[e] and that it would suddenly make great conquests.

It is one of the most familiar weaknesses of human intelligence to want to reconcile contrary principles and to buy peace at the expense of logic.

c. "Two very curious conversations could be done, one with a Protestant minister, the other with a Catholic priest. They would be made to uphold on all points opposed [*sic*] to what they are in the custom of upholding elsewhere.

"These conversations would have to be preceded by a portrait of these two men and of their institutions. Very piquant details would result from all of that for the French public above all" (YTC, CVa, p. 55. See the appendix bearing the title SECTS IN AMERICA).

d. The manuscript says: "repulse them."

e. The chapter finishes in this way in the manuscript:

"and that it would end by being the only religion of all those who would have a religion.

"I think that it is possible that all men who make up the Christian nations will in the long run come to be no longer divided except into two parts. Some will leave Christianity entirely and others will go into the Roman Church."

In 1843, Tocqueville had a very different secret opinion about the relation between Catholicism and democracy.

"Catholicism," he wrote to Francisque de Corcelle, "which produces such admirable effects in certain cases, which must be upheld with all one's power because in France religious spirit can exist only with it, Catholicism, I am very afraid, will never adopt the new society. It will never forget the position that it had in the old one and every time that [it] is given some powers, it will hasten to abuse them. I will say that only to you. But I say it to you, because I want to have you enter into my most secret thought" *Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 1, p. 174.

So there have always been and will always be men who, after submitting a few of their religious beliefs to an authority, will want some other religious beliefs to elude it, and will allow their minds to float haphazardly between obedience and liberty. But I am led to believe that the number of the latter will be fewer in democratic centuries than in other centuries, and that our descendants will tend more and more to divide into only two parts, some leaving Christianity entirely, others going into the Roman Church.

CHAPTER 7

What Makes the Minds of Democratic Peoples Incline toward Pantheism[a]

I will show later how the predominant taste of democratic peoples for very general ideas is found again in politics; but now I want to point out its principal effect in philosophy.

It cannot be denied that pantheism has made great progress in our time. The writings of a portion of Europe clearly carry its mark. The Germans introduce it into philosophy, and the French into literature. Among the works of the imagination that are published in France, most contain some opinions or some portrayals borrowed from pantheistic doctrines, or allow a sort of tendency toward those doctrines to be seen in their authors. This does not appear to me to happen only by accident, but is due to a lasting cause.[b]

As conditions become more equal and each man in particular becomes more similar to all the others, weaker and smaller, you get used to no longer envisaging citizens in order to consider only the people; you forget individuals in order to think only about the species.

In these times, the human mind loves to embrace all at once [and to mix up in the same view] a host of diverse matters; it constantly aspires to be able to connect a multitude of consequences to a single cause.

a. In the first page of the manuscript: "≠Very small chapter done afterward and that I think should be placed after *general ideas.* Think more whether it must be included and where to place it. Perhaps it is too unique to be separate.≠"

It carries the number 3bis in the manuscript, and the first paragraph clearly indicates that at the moment of drafting it followed the current chapter 4, consecrated to general ideas in politics. The jacket of the chapter in the manuscript also contains a rough draft of the chapter.

b. In the margin, in pencil: "[illegible word]. Ampère."

The mind is obsessed by the idea of unity, looking for it in all directions, and, when it believes unity has been found, it embraces it and rests there. Not only does the human mind come to discover in the world only one creation and one creator, this first division of things still bothers it, and it readily tries to enlarge and to simplify its thought by containing God and the universe in a single whole. If I find a philosophical system according to which the things material and immaterial, visible and invisible that the world contains are no longer considered except as the various parts of an immense being that alone remains eternal amid the continual change and incessant transformation of everything that composes it, I will have no difficulty concluding that such a system, although it destroys human individuality, or rather because it destroys it, will have secret charms for men who live in democracy; all their intellectual habits prepare them for conceiving it and set them on the path to adopt it. It naturally attracts their imagination and fixes it; it feeds the pride of their mind and flatters its laziness.[c]

Among the different systems by the aid of which philosophy seeks to explain the world, pantheism seems to me the one most likely to seduce the human mind in democratic centuries.[d] All those who remain enamored of the true grandeur of man must join forces and struggle against it.

c. Religious .-.-.-.-.-.- of a unique being regulating all men by the same laws is an essentially democratic idea. It can arise in other centuries, but it can have its complete development only in these centuries. Example of that in the Christianity of the Middle Ages when populations, without losing the general idea of a unique god, split up the divinity in the form of saints. So in democratic centuries a religion that wants to strike minds naturally must therefore get as close as possible to the idea of unity, of generality, of equality" (With the notes of chapter 5. *Rubish,* 1).

d. "Democracy, which brings about the idea of the unity of human nature, brings men back constantly to the idea of the unity of the creator./

"Household gods, particular saints of a family, patrons of cities and of kingdoms, all that is aristocratic.

"To accept all these different celestial powers, you must not believe all to be of the same species.

[With a bracket that includes the last two paragraphs: *Hic.*]" (In the *rubish* of chapter 5. *Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 8[a]

How Equality Suggests to the Americans the Idea of the Indefinite Perfectibility of Man[b] [TN 7]

Equality suggests several ideas to the human mind that would not have occurred to it otherwise, and it modifies nearly all those that the mind already had. I take for example the idea of human perfectibility, because it is one of the principal ones that intelligence can conceive and because it

a. A note from the *rubish* of the foreword indicates that Tocqueville had thought of having this chapter followed by the one on interest well understood:

> After showing how a democratic social state could give birth in the human mind to the idea of indefinite perfectibility, my intention was to show how this same social state brings men to adopt the doctrine of interest well understood as principal rule of life.
>
> I would have thus pointed out to the reader the two principal ideas that in America [added: it seems to me] guide most of the actions of the Americans.
>
> But I am finding unforeseen difficulties that force me to divide my work (With notes of the foreword. *Rubish,* 1).

b. 1. The idea of human perfectibility is as old as man. But equality gives it a new character.

2. Among aristocratic peoples where everything is immobile and appears eternal, where men are fixed in castes, classes or professions that they cannot leave, the idea of perfectibility appears to the human mind only in a confused form and with very narrow limits.

3. In democratic societies where each man can try on his behalf to ameliorate his lot, where everything changes constantly and gives rise to infinite attempts, where each individual comparing himself to the mass has a prodigious idea of the form [strength? (ed.)] of the latter, the idea of perfectibility besets the human mind and assumes immense proportions.

4. This shown by America (YTC, CVf, pp. 7–8).

Translator's Note 7: For this title and chapter, I have used the cognate *indefinite,* a more literary term still carrying the sense of *without limit* or *not limited,* rather than using either *unlimited* or *infinite.*

constitutes by itself alone a great philosophical theory whose consequences are revealed each moment in the conduct of affairs.

Although man resembles animals in several ways, one feature is particular only to him alone; he perfects himself, and they do not perfect themselves. The human species could not fail to discover this difference from the beginning. So the idea of perfectibility is as old as the world; equality did not give birth to it, but equality gave it a new character.

When citizens are classed according to rank, profession, birth, and when all are compelled to follow the path on which chance placed them, each man believes that near him he sees the furthest limits of human power, and no one tries any more to struggle against an inevitable destiny. It is not that aristocratic peoples absolutely deny man the ability to perfect himself. They do not judge it to be indefinite; they conceive of amelioration, not change; they imagine the condition of society becoming better, but not different; and, while admitting that humanity has made great progress and that it can still make more progress, they enclose humanity in advance within impassable limits.

So they do not believe they have reached the supreme good and absolute truth (what man or what people has been so foolish ever to imagine that?), but they like to persuade themselves that they have almost attained the degree of grandeur and knowledge that our imperfect nature entails; and since nothing stirs around them, they readily imagine that everything is in its place.[c] That is when the lawmaker claims to promulgate eternal laws, when peoples and kings want to erect only enduring monuments and when the present generation assumes the task of sparing future generations the trouble of regulating their own destiny.

c. Certitude:

I imagine that after long debating a point with others and with yourself, you reach the *will* to act, but not *certitude.* Discussion can show clearly what must be done, but almost never with utter certainty what must be believed. It always raises more new objections than the old ones it destroys. Only it draws the mind from the fog in which it rested and, allowing it to see different *probabilities* distinctly, forces it to come to a decision.

[On the side: June 1838.] (YTC, CVa, p. 47).

As castes disappear, as classes come closer together, as common practices, customs, and laws vary because men are mixed tumultuously together, as new facts arise, as new truths come to light, as old opinions disappear and as others take their place, the image of an ideal and always fleeting perfection presents itself to the human mind.

Continual changes then pass before the eyes of each man at every moment. Some changes worsen his position, and he understands only too well that a people or an individual, however enlightened, is not infallible. Other changes improve his lot, and he concludes that man, in general, is endowed with the indefinite ability to improve. His failures make him see that no one can claim to have discovered absolute good; his successes inflame him in pursuing the absolute good without respite. Therefore, always searching, falling, getting up again, often disappointed, never discouraged, he tends constantly toward this immense grandeur that he half sees vaguely at the end of the long course that humanity must still cover.

[When conditions are equal each man finds himself so small next to the mass that he imagines nothing equivalent to the efforts of the latter. The sentiment of his own weakness leads him each day to exaggerate the power of the human species.]

You cannot believe how many facts flow naturally from this philosophical theory that man is indefinitely perfectible,[d] and the prodigious influ-

d. I am so sure that everything in this world has its limit that not to see the limit of something seems to me to be the most certain sign of the weakness of the human mind.

A man is endowed with an intelligence superior to that of the common man. He has beautiful thoughts, great sentiments; he takes extraordinary actions. How would I take hold of him in order to bring him back to the common level?

He deems that a certain truth that strikes his view is applicable in all times and to all men, or he judges that one of his fellows whom he admires is worthy to be admired and merits being imitated in everything.

That is enough to make me see his limits and to indicate to me where he comes back into the ordinary conditions of humanity.

He would place the limit of the true and the good elsewhere than where I place it myself; from that I would not conclude that he *fails at everything at this point;* I would instead feel disposed to believe that I am wrong myself.

ence that it exercises on even those who, occupied only with acting and not with thinking, seem to conform their actions to it without knowing it.

I meet an American sailor, and I ask him why the vessels of his country are constituted so as not to last for long, and he answers me without hesitation that the art of navigation makes such rapid progress each day, that the most beautiful ship would soon become nearly useless if it lasted beyond a few years.[e]

In these chance words said by a coarse man and in regard to a particular fact, I see the general and systematic idea by which a great people conducts all things.

Aristocratic nations are naturally led to compress the limits of human perfectibility too much, and democratic nations to extend them sometimes beyond measure.

But if he puts the limit nowhere, I have no further need to discuss it and I regard it as established that he is wrong.

5 April 1836. (YTC, CVa, pp. 35–36).

e. Note of Tocqueville in the manuscript: "This answer was given to me, but it concerned only steamboats."

CHAPTER 9[a]

How the Example of the Americans Does Not Prove That a Democratic People Cannot Have Aptitude and Taste for the Sciences, Literature, and the Arts[b]

a. On the jacket containing the chapter: "The first part of the chapter seems good to me. The second does not satisfy me. The evidence does not grab my mind. Something, I do not know what, is missing./

"Perhaps it will be necessary to have the courage to delete this section entirely in order to arrive immediately at the chapter on details." See note a of pp. 696–97.

The cover of the *rubish* of this chapter bears this note: "Very considerable and sufficiently finished fragments of the chapter as it was before the revision of September 1838" (*Rubish,* 1). Tocqueville already had worked on the chapters on art, science and literature in June 1836.

Bonnel (YTC, CVf, p. 1) remarks that a copy of the *Journal des débats* of 2 April 1838 exists inside a jacket on which Tocqueville wrote: "Journal to reread when I treat the direction that equality gives to the fine arts." The number of the *Journal des débats* cited contains the second part of the review, by Philarète Chasles, of the work of E. J. Delécluze, *Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Léopold Robert* (Paris: Rittner and Goupil, 1838); the first had been published March 18. This book contains a commentary on the industrialization of art that could have interested Tocqueville.

b. 1. The Americans have made little progress in the sciences, letters and arts.

2. This is due to causes that are more American than democratic.

1. Puritan origin.

2. Nature of the country that leads too vigorously to the sole search for riches.

3. Proximity of scientific and literary Europe and of England in particular.

3. Why other democratic peoples would be different.

1. A people who would be ignorant and (illegible word) at the same time as democratic, not only would not cultivate the sciences, letters and the arts, but also would never come to cultivate them. The law would constantly undo fortunes without creating new ones. Since ignorance and (illegible word) benumb souls, the poor man would not even have the idea of bettering his lot and the rich man of defending himself against the approach of poverty. Equality would become complete and invincible and no one would ever have either the time or the taste for devoting them-

It must be recognized that, among the civilized people of today, there are few among whom the advanced sciences have made less progress than in the United States, and who have provided fewer great artists, illustrious poets and celebrated writers.[c]

Some Europeans, struck by this spectacle, have considered it as a natural and inevitable result of equality, and they have thought that, if the democratic social state and institutions came at some time to prevail over all the

selves to the works and pleasures of the mind. But it isn't the same with a people who become democratic while remaining enlightened and free. Why:

1. Since each man conceives the idea of the better and has the liberty to strive toward it, a general effort is made toward wealth. Since each man is reduced to his own strength, he attains wealth depending on whether he has greater or lesser natural abilities. And since natural inequality is very great, fortunes become very unequal and the law of inheritance has no effect other than preventing the perpetuation of wealth in families. From the moment when inequality of fortunes exists, there are men of leisure, and from the moment when men have leisure, they tend by themselves toward the works and pleasures of the mind.

In an enlightened and free democratic society, men of leisure will have neither the usual wealth, nor the perfect tranquillity, nor the interests that the members of an aristocracy have, but they are much more numerous.

2. Not only is the number of those who can occupy their intelligence greater, but also the pleasures and the works of the mind are followed by a crowd of men who would in no way be involved in them in aristocratic societies.

[In the margin:

1. Utility of knowledge which appears to all and which arouses all to attempt to acquire some knowledge.

2. Perpetual mixture of all classes, all men continually growing closer together, emulation, ambition, envy that make even the worker claim to give his mind some culture.

3. From the moment when the crowd is led to the works of the mind, a multitude devotes itself to them with ardor in order to gain glory, power, wealth. Democratic activity shows itself there as elsewhere. Production is immense.

Conclusion. Enlightened and free democratic societies do not neglect the sciences, the arts, letters; they only cultivate them in their own way] (YTC, CVf, pp. 8–10).

c. "To begin the chapter by: It must be recognized . . . something moderate, *supple,* and not too intensely satirical. I must not put the Americans *too low,* if afterward I want to raise up other democratic peoples" (*Rubish,* 1).

earth,[d] the human mind would see the enlightenment that illuminates it darken little by little, and man would fall back into the shadows.

d. Passage that began the chapter, in a jacket of the *rubish* that carries this explanation:

≠Portion of the chapter relating to the particular reasons that turn Americans away from the sciences, literature and the arts.≠/

Portions of the old chapter./

.-.-.-.-.-.- the frontiers of the United States toward the Northwest still meet here and there in nearly inaccessible places and on the banks of raging torrents against whose course European boats or canoes are unable to go, small groups of beavers half destroyed, remnants of a great amphibious population that formerly extended over the major part of the continent. Although reduced to a very small number, these industrious animals have kept their habits, I could almost say their civilization and their laws.

You see them as in the past devote themselves to different types of industry with surprising dexterity and marvelous harmony. They make bridges, raise large dams that make the rivers meander and, after establishing the walls of the dwelling according to a methodical and uniform plan, they take care to isolate it in the middle of a lake created by their efforts.

That is where, in a secure and tranquil refuge, the generations succeed each other obscurely, amid a profound peace and an unbroken well-being.

Although the most perfect harmony seems to reign within this small society, you cannot find there, if the accounts of the *voyageurs* do not mislead us, the trace of a hierarchical order; each one there is busy without letup with his affairs, but is always ready to lend his aid.

One day civilized man, this destroyer or this ruler of all beings, comes to pass by and the amphibious republic [v: nation] disappears forever without leaving a trace.

[In the margin: See the description of Buffon. Order, property, comfort, work in common and the division of property, public granaries, internal peace, union of all to repulse external violence.]

Ill-humored observers have been found who wanted to see in this republic of beavers a fairly faithful symbol of the republic of the United States.

Americans have concentrated, it is true, in a surprising way on material concerns .-.-.-.- to man only to have him more easily discover the means to satisfy the needs of the body.

It is not that the inhabitant of the United States is a coarse [v: unpolished] being, but among the products of civilization, he has chosen what was most defined, most material, most positive in order to appropriate it for himself. He has devoted himself to the study of the sciences only to look immediately for the useful applications; in letters, he saw only a powerful means to create individual affluence and social well-being; and he cultivated the arts much less to produce objects of value than to decorate and beautify the existence of the rich. You could say that he wanted to develop the

Those who reason in this way confuse, I think, several ideas that it would be important to separate and to examine apart. Without wanting to, they mix what is democratic with what is only American.[e]

The religion that the first emigrants professed and that they handed down to their descendants, simple in its worship, austere and nearly primitive in its principles, enemy of external signs and of the pomp of ceremonies, is naturally little favorable to the fine arts and permits literary pleasures only reluctantly.

[≠At their arrival on the shores of the New World, these men were at first assailed by such great needs and threatened by such great dangers, that they had to dedicate all the resources of their intelligence to satisfying the first and overcoming the second.≠]

The Americans are a very ancient and very enlightened people, who encountered a new and immense country in which they can expand at will, and that they make fruitful without difficulty. That is without example in

intellectual power of man only to make it serve the pleasures of his physical nature and that he has employed all the resources of the angel only to perfect the animal [variant in the margin: ≠beast≠].

Among the Europeans who from their arrival in the United States have been struck by this spectacle, there are several who have seen in this tendency of the American mind a necessary and inevitable result of democracy and who have thought that if democratic institutions succeeded in prevailing over all the earth the human mind . . ." (*rubish,* 1).

In the *rubish* INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY ON LITERATURE, Tocqueville comments: "To make fun of those who believe that democracy will lead us to live like the *beavers.* Perhaps true if it had started with societies.

"[To the side: Democracy without liberty would perhaps extinguish the enlightenment of the human mind. You would then have only the vices of the system.]"

Cf. *Pensée* 257 of Pascal (Lafuma edition). Also see *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, p. 389.

The library of the Tocqueville château contained at least two works of Buffon: *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière,* 1769, 13 vols.; and *Histoire naturelle des oiseaux,* 1770, 4 vols. (YTC, AIe).

e. In the margin: "<The Americans have appeared to concentrate on the material cares of life and they have seemed to believe that intelligence was given to man only to allow him more easily to discover the means to satisfy the needs of the body.>" On this subject, see Teddy Brunius, *Alexis de Tocqueville, the Sociological Aesthetician* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wicksell, 1960).

the world. So in America, each man finds opportunities unknown elsewhere to make or to increase his fortune. Greed is always in good condition there, and the human mind, distracted at every moment from the pleasures of the imagination and the works of intelligence, is drawn only into the pursuit of wealth. Not only do you see in the United States, as in all other countries, industrial and commercial classes; but, what has never been seen, all men there are busy at the same time with industry and with commerce.

I am persuaded however that, if the Americans had been alone in the universe, with the liberties and enlightenment acquired by their fathers and the passions that were their own, they would not have taken long to discover that you cannot make progress for long in the application of the sciences without cultivating the theory; that all the arts improve by their interaction, and however absorbed they might have been in the pursuit of the principal object of their desires, they would soon have recognized that to reach it better, they had to turn away from it from time to time.

The taste for pleasures of the mind is, moreover, so natural to the heart of civilized man that, among the cultured nations that are least disposed to devote themselves to it, there is always a certain number of citizens who develop it. This intellectual need, once felt, would have soon been satisfied.

But, at the same time that the Americans were led naturally to ask of science only its particular applications, of the arts only the means to make life easy, learned and literary Europe took care of going back to the general sources of truth, and perfected at the same time all that can work toward the pleasures of man as well as all that must serve his needs.[f]

f. To the side: "≠America forms like one part of the middle classes of England.≠" In the *rubish,* inside the jacket that is entitled PORTIONS OF THE OLD CHAPTER:

Among all the classes which made up the English nation there was particularly one that, placed above the people by its comfort and below the nobles by the mediocrity of its fortune, possessed the tranquil tastes [v: the love of well-being], the simple habits, the incomplete enlightenment, the good practical and [blank (ed.)] sense that in nearly all countries. .-.-.-.-.- middle classes. It was the middle classes that provided to the population of the United States its principal and so to speak its only elements.

At the head of the enlightened nations of the Old World, the inhabitants of the United States particularly singled out one with whom a common origin and analogous habits closely united them. They found among this people famous scientists, skilled artists, great writers, and they could reap the rewards of intelligence without needing to work to accumulate them.

I cannot agree to separate America from Europe, despite the Ocean that divides them. I consider the people of the United States as the portion of the English people charged with exploiting the forests of the New World, while the rest of the nation, provided with more leisure and less preoccupied by the material cares of life, is able to devote itself to thought and to develop the human mind in all aspects.

[<≠So I think that democracy must no more be judged by America than the different nations of Europe by one of the commercial and manufacturing classes that are found within them.≠>]

So the situation of the Americans is entirely exceptional, and it may be believed that no democratic people will ever be put in the same situation. Their entirely Puritan origin, their uniquely commercial habits, even the country that they inhabit and that seems to divert their intelligence from the study of the sciences, letters and the arts; the proximity of Europe, that allows them not to study them without falling back into barbarism; a thousand particular causes, of which I have been able to show only the principal ones, had to concentrate the American mind in a singular way in the concern for purely material things. The passions, needs, education, circumstances, everything seems in fact to combine to bend the inhabitant of the

Scarcely transported to the shores of the New World, these men were at first assailed by great needs and threatened by great dangers against which they had at first to direct their entire attention in order to satisfy the first and to ward off the second.

After these first obstacles had been conquered, it was found that the country they inhabited offered such incredible possibilities to human industry that there was no one there who could not aspire to comfort and many to wealth, so that the human mind, diverted from the pursuit of the sciences, distracted from the pleasures of the mind, insensitive to the attractions of the arts, found itself as if carried away despite itself by a rapid torrent toward only the acquisition of wealth [v: well-being]" (*Rubish,* 1).

United States toward the earth. Religion alone makes him, from time to time, turn a fleeting and distracted gaze toward heaven.

So let us stop seeing all democratic nations with the face of the American people, and let us try finally to consider them with their own features.[g]

g. Fragment in the manuscript:

"≠If those who think that the sciences, letters and the arts cannot prosper among democratic peoples assumed the existence of the three principal circumstances that I am going to talk about, I would perhaps share their sentiment.

I imagine a people newly emerged from the uncivilized state, among whom conditions remained equal and political power is concentrated in the hands of one man. That among a democratic nation of this type the human mind would be stopped in its development, curbed and as if struck by a sort of intellectual paralysis, I accept without difficulty.≠

[In the margin: Here take if possible a confident, simple, short, broken, didactic style. Free myself from the oratorical form.

Read Beaumont's piece.

Under democracies that come after an aristocratic order, that are enlightened and free, the sciences, literature and the arts develop, but they develop in a certain way./

America itself can provide us with illuminating details on this point.

(Note) The underlined sentence must not be lost from view and try to bind myself to it.

This chapter on general ideas must be short and followed by separate small chapters on the sciences, letters and the arts. Mix America as much as possible with all of that.]

≠But why imagine an imaginary democracy when we can easily conceive of a real one? What good is it to go back to the origin of the world≠ when what is happening before our eyes is enough to enlighten us?

I take the European peoples such as they appear before my eyes, with their aristocratic traditions, their acquired enlightenment, their liberties, and I wonder if by becoming democratic they risk, as some would like to persuade us, falling back into a kind of barbarism.

There exists at the bottom of the human heart a natural taste for things of the mind and the enjoyments of the imagination, as well as an instinctive tendency toward the pleasures of the senses. The mind of man left to itself leans from one side toward the limited, the material and the commercial, the useful, from the other it tends without effort toward the infinite, the non-material, the great and the beautiful.

So when men have once tasted, as among us, the intellectual and delicate pleasures that civilization provides, I cannot believe that he [*sic*] will ever get sick of them. Legislation, social state can direct in a certain way the natural tendency that leads men there, but not destroy it.

[To the side, with a bracket that includes the last two paragraphs: ≠All of that is perhaps too metaphysical, too long . . .≠]

You can imagine a people among whom there would be neither caste, nor hierarchy, nor class; where the law, recognizing no privileges, would divide inheritances equally; and who, at the same time, would be deprived of enlightenment and liberty. This is not an empty hypothesis: a despot can find it in his interest to make his subjects equal and to leave them ignorant, in order to keep them slaves more easily.

Not only would a democratic people of this type show neither aptitude nor taste for the sciences, literature and the arts, but also you may believe that it will never show them.

The law of inheritance would itself undertake in each generation to destroy fortunes, and no one would create new ones. The poor man, deprived of enlightenment and liberty, would not even conceive the idea of rising toward wealth, and the rich man would allow himself to be carried along toward poverty without knowing how to defend himself. A complete and

Give a democratic people enlightenment and liberty and you will see them, you can be sure, bring to the study of the sciences, letters and the arts the same feverish activity that they show in all the rest.

[In the margin: The first idea is this one:

A people who has acquired the habit of literary pleasures cannot get out of the habit completely. There will always remain at least a large number of men who will keep it and there will be utility and profit in satisfying the latter.

The second:

Among an enlightened and free people equality cannot fail to have limits. Many rich men, men of leisure who perhaps would not by themselves conceive the pleasures of the imagination but who take to those that they see being enjoyed.]"

Beaumont commented on the study of the sciences in America in *Marie,* I, pp. 247–48.

Some years later, Tocqueville had partially changed his opinion. In a letter dating probably from 1856 and perhaps addressed to Mignet, he asserted:

Under the spell that your reading cast on me yesterday, I forgot to make a small observation to you that has recurred to me since and [that (ed.)] I do not want to leave absolutely in silence. It concerns the very amusing portrait that you do of the Americans, above all of their scorn for letters. I know that you do not speak there in your name; nonetheless, I believe that a small correction from you would do well in that place. I am talking above all of the accusation of being indifferent to letters. You know that since then they have made, even in this direction, very notable progress. They begin to count among civilized nations, even in the sciences that relate to pure theory, like metaphysics. A single parenthesis by you on this subject will reestablish equity without reducing any of the charm of the tableau (Private archives).

invincible equality would soon be established between these two citizens. No one would then have either the time or the taste for devoting himself to the works and pleasures of the mind. But everyone would live benumbed in the same ignorance and in an equal servitude.

When I come to imagine a democratic society of this type, I immediately think I feel myself in one of these low, dark and suffocating places, where lights, brought in from outside, soon grow dim and are extinguished. It seems to me that a sudden weight overwhelms me, and that I am dragging myself along among the shadows around me in order to find the exit that should lead me back to the air and daylight. But all of this cannot apply to men already enlightened who remain free after destroying the particular and hereditary rights that perpetuated property in the hands of certain individuals or certain bodies.

[<In democratic societies of this type equality encounters necessary limits that it cannot go beyond.>]

When the men who live within a democratic society are enlightened, they discover without difficulty that nothing either limits them or fixes their situation or forces them to be content with their present fortune.

So they all conceive the idea of increasing it, and, if they are free, they all try to do so, but all do not succeed in the same way. The legislature, it is true, no longer grants privileges, but nature gives them. Since natural inequality is very great, fortunes become unequal from the moment when each man makes use of all his abilities in order to grow rich.

The law of inheritance is still opposed to the establishment of rich families, but it no longer prevents the existence of the rich. It constantly leads citizens back toward a common level from which they constantly escape; they become more unequal in property the more their enlightenment increases and the greater their liberty is.

In our time a sect celebrated for its genius and its extravagances arose; it claimed to concentrate all property in the hands of a central power and to charge the latter with distributing it afterward, according to merit, to all individuals. You were shielded in this way from the complete and eternal equality that seems to threaten democratic societies.

There is another simpler and less dangerous remedy; it is to grant privilege to no one, to give everyone equal enlightenment and an equal inde-

pendence, and to leave to each man the care of making his place for himself. Natural inequality will soon appear and wealth will pass by itself toward the most able.[h]

So [enlightened] and free democratic societies will always contain within them a multitude of wealthy or well-to-do men. These rich men will not be bound as closely together as members of the old aristocratic class; they will have different instincts and will hardly ever possess a leisure as secure and as complete; but they will be infinitely more numerous than those who composed this class could have been. These men will not be narrowly confined within the preoccupations of material life and they will be able, although to varying degrees, to devote themselves to the works and pleasures of the mind. So they will devote themselves to them; for, if it is true that the human mind leans from one side toward the limited, the material and the useful, from the other, it rises naturally toward the infinite, the nonmaterial and the beautiful. Physical needs attach the mind to the earth, but, as soon as you no longer hold it down, it stands up by itself.

Not only will the number of those who can interest themselves in the works of the mind be greater, but also the taste for intellectual enjoyments will descend, from one person to the next, even to those who, in aristocratic societies, seem to have neither the time nor the capacity to devote themselves to those enjoyments.

When there are no more hereditary riches, privileges of class and prerogatives of birth, and when each man no longer draws his strength except from himself, it becomes clear that what makes the principal difference among the fortunes of men is intelligence. All that serves to fortify, to expand and to embellish intelligence immediately acquires a great value.

h. ≠Give all citizens equal means [v: instruction and liberty] to achieve wealth and prevent wealth acquired by the individual efforts of one of them from then going to accumulate by itself and being transmitted without difficulty to all of his descendants, and you will very naturally approach the goal toward which the Saint-Simonians claim to go, without using the dangerous and impractical means that they indicate. Leave men alone. They will class themselves according to their capacity, just watch that nothing prevents them from doing so.≠

[In the margin] These ideas are capital. They clarify my mind and clearly show me the place where it is necessary to build (*Rubish,* 1. A nearly identical passage exists on the page that carries the number 8).

The utility of knowledge reveals itself with an extremely particular clarity to the very eyes of the crowd. Those who do not appreciate its charms value its effects and make some efforts to achieve it.

In enlightened and free democratic centuries, men have nothing that separates them or anything that keeps them in their place; they go up or go down with a singular rapidity. All classes see each other constantly, because they are very close. They communicate and mingle every day, imitate and envy each other; that suggests to the people a host of ideas, notions, desires that they would not have had if ranks had been fixed and society immobile. In these nations, the servant never considers himself as a complete stranger to the pleasures and works of the master, the poor to those of the rich; the man of the country tries hard to resemble the man of the city, and the provinces, the metropolis.

Thus, no one allows himself easily to be reduced to the material cares of life alone, and the most humble artisan casts, from time to time, a few eager and furtive glances into the superior world of intelligence. People do not read in the same spirit and in the same way as among aristocratic peoples; but the circle of readers expands constantly and ends by including all citizens.[j]

From the moment when the crowd begins to be interested in the works of the mind, it discovers that a great means to acquire glory, power or wealth is to excel in a few of them. The restless ambition given birth by equality [v: democracy] immediately turns in this direction as in all the others. The number of those who cultivate the sciences, letters and the arts becomes immense. A prodigious activity reveals itself in the world of the mind; each man seeks to open a path for himself there and tries hard to attract the eye of the public. Something occurs there analogous to what happens in the United States in political society; works are often imperfect, but they are

j. So I am persuaded that conditions, by becoming more equal among us, will only extend the circle of those who know and value literary pleasures. The whole question is knowing whether or not they will lose on the side of purity of taste what they gain on the side of numbers.

But I am far from believing that among democratic peoples who have enlightenment and liberty, the number of men of leisure will be as small as is supposed (*Rubish,* 1).

innumerable; and, although the results of individual efforts are ordinarily very small, the general result is always very great.

So it is not true to say that men who live in democratic centuries are naturally indifferent to the sciences, letters and the arts; only it must be recognized that they cultivate them in their own way, and that they bring, from this direction, qualities and defects that are their own.

CHAPTER 10[a]

Why the Americans Are More Attached to the Application of the Sciences Than to the Theory[b]

a. 1. Among democratic peoples, each man wants to judge by himself; no one likes to believe anyone on his word; no one talks a lot of fine words. All these instincts are found again in the scientific world, and give to the sciences among the latter peoples a free, sure, experimental, but less lofty course.

2. Three distinct parts of the sciences, one purely theoretical, another (illegible word) theoretical but close to application, a last absolutely applied.

The Americans excel in the last two and neglect the first one, why:

1. Meditation is needed to make progress in the most theoretical portion of the sciences. The perpetual movement that reigns in democratic societies does not allow devoting oneself to it. It takes away the time and also the desire. In societies where nearly everyone is constantly in action, there is little esteem for meditation.

2. It is the lofty and disinterested love of truth that pushes the human mind toward the abstract portion of the sciences. These great scientific passions show themselves more rarely in democratic centuries than in others, why:

1. Because the social state does not lead to great passions in general, and does not keep souls on so lofty a tone.

2. Because men who live in democratic societies are constantly in a hurry to enjoy, are discontent with their position and, aspiring to change it, are not led to value the sciences except as means to go by the easiest and shortest roads to wealth. So they reward scientists in this spirit and push them constantly in this direction.

[In the margin: I know something more striking, clearer, better finally than this deduction, but my mind refuses to grasp it.]

3. In democratic centuries, the government must exercise all its efforts to sustain the theoretical study of the sciences. Practical study develops by itself.

4. If men turned entirely away from theory to occupy themselves only with the practical, they could again become by themselves nearly barbarous. Example of China (YTC, CVf, pp. 11–12).

b. Order of ideas./

If the democratic social state and democratic institutions do not stop the development of the human mind, it is at least incontestable that they lead it in one direction rather than another. Their efforts, limited in this way, are still very great, and you will pardon me, I hope, for stopping a moment to contemplate them.

When it was a matter of the philosophical method of the Americans, I made several remarks that we should benefit from here.

Equality develops in every man the desire to judge everything by himself; it gives him, in everything, the taste for the tangible and the real, scorn for traditions and forms. These general instincts make themselves seen principally in the particular subject of this chapter.

Those who cultivate the sciences among democratic peoples are always afraid of being lost in utopias. They distrust systems; they love to stay very close to the facts and to study them by themselves; since they do not allow themselves to be easily impressed by the name of any one of their fellows, they are never inclined to swear on the word of the master; but, on the contrary, you see them constantly occupied with searching for the weak part of his doctrine. Scientific traditions have little sway over them; they never stop for long in the subtleties of a school, and they spin out a lot of fancy words with difficulty; they enter as much as they can into the principal parts of the subject that occupies them, and they love to explain them in

1. Three parts in each science: high, middle, low.

This proved by the science of laws.

These three parts hold together but can be cultivated separately.

2. Equality leads men to neglect the first, in order to occupy themselves only with the other two. Why:

1. No meditation possible in the middle of democratic movement.

2. Great political liberty that deprives science of great geniuses and great passions. This is not necessarily democratic.

First a distinction must be made between nations that possess great political liberty and those that do not have it. This is a great question: *political* genius and *scientific* genius are so different that you can say that one only inflames the other without diverting it.

3. Two types of scientific passions, one *disinterested* and lofty, the other *mercantile* and low (*Rubish,* 1).

common language. The sciences then have a freer and more certain, but less lofty allure.[c]

The mind can, it seems to me, divide science into three parts.

The first contains the most theoretical principles, the most abstract notions, the ones whose application is unknown or very distant.

The second is made up of general truths that, though still pure theory, lead nevertheless by a direct and short path to application.

The processes of application and the means of execution fulfill[d] the third.[e]

c. "Under democracy the sciences get rid of useless words, of empty formulas. Efforts of the Americans to get out of the judicial routine of the English. Code of Ohio. See Beaumont, G. B. Q." (*Rubish,* 1). Cf. *Marie,* I, pp. 247–48.

d. Note in the margin: "Louis thinks that this piece should be modified a bit and do three classes of scientists instead of three classes of sciences. For, in fact, he says, there are only two of them."

e. At the end of the chapter, you find a jacket with the title: "Development that seemed too long to me, but which is good in itself.":

> An example would make my thought easier to grasp: I would choose the science that I know best which is that of the laws. The distinctions that I have just indicated are found in the science of laws and I believe, without being able to assert it in so positive a way, that you should see at least the trace of those distinctions in all of the laws and principally in those that are called exact, because of the rigorous manner in which they proceed.
>
> There is a science of laws whose object is lofty, speculative, general. The former works hard to find the rules by which human societies exist and to determine the laws that various peoples must impose on themselves in order to reach the goal that they propose for themselves.
>
> There is a science of laws that, taking hold of a particular body of laws, or even of the higher portion of a body of laws, demonstrates what general principles dominate there and shows the economy that reigns and the overall view that is revealed.
>
> There is a last one that enters into the administrative or judicial detail of the processes by which the legislator wanted to have his plans carried out, learns how political assemblies or the courts interpreted their will, and that teaches the art of making good the rights of each citizen with the aid of the laws.
>
> A class of scholars is attached to each of these portions of the science to whom you give the name writers on law, legal experts, jurists (examine these definitions in the best authors).
>
> If you now come to examine how these different men are related to each other, you discover that in the long run the legal expert and the jurist cannot do without

Each one of these different portions of science can be cultivated separately, even though reason and experience make it known that none of them can prosper for long when it is separated absolutely from the other two.

In America, the purely applied part of the sciences is admirably cultivated, and the theoretical portion immediately necessary to application is carefully attended to; in this regard the Americans reveal a mind always clear, free, original and fruitful; but there is hardly anyone in the United States who devotes himself to the essentially theoretical and abstract portion of human knowledge. In this the Americans show the excess of a tendency that will be found, I think, although to a lesser degree, among all democratic peoples.[f]

the writer on law, but that at a given moment they can easily act and prosper independently of him.

If men limited themselves to studying the whole and the detail of existing laws without ever going as far as the general theory of laws, it is clear that by degrees they would reach the point of seeing in the legislation of their country only a collection of formulas that they would end up using without exactly understanding their sense, and that they would not take long to become miserably lost in the maze of the subtleties of the school. That is how you can truthfully say that there is a necessary relation between Montesquieu and the least bailiff of the kingdom, in such a way that the enlightenment of the first gives light by a far and distant reflection to the works of the second.

But men do not need to return every day to the philosophy of law in order to know the laws in force; without having sought what the legislator must have wanted, they are able to understand what he wanted. They are able to apply the general wills [*volontés générales*—Trans.] to the particular case and draw from legal science its most useful consequences. Therefore each one of these different portions of the science of laws can be cultivated separately, although each cannot prosper in the long run when it is separated absolutely from the others. Coming back now to my subject, I want to know if democracy tends to develop the various parts of science in the same way.

In America, where the practical portion of human knowledge and the theoretical portion immediately necessary for application are admirably cultivated, there is so to speak no example of anyone interested in the essentially theoretical and general part.

I think that you would not do justice by attributing this to democracy alone. The Americans are pushed exclusively toward application by powerful causes that are due neither to the social state nor to the political constitution. I have carefully enumerated them above.

[In the margin] *Quid.*

f. Now in all free governments, a great number of men are involved in politics, and

Nothing is more necessary to the cultivation of the advanced sciences, or of the higher portion of the sciences, than meditation; and nothing is less appropriate to meditation than the interior of a democratic society. There you do not find, as among aristocratic peoples, a numerous class that remains at rest because it finds itself well-off, and another that does not stir because it despairs of being better-off. Each man is in motion; some want to attain power, others to take hold of wealth. Amid this universal tumult, this repeated clash of contrary interests, this continual march of men toward fortune, where to find the calm necessary for profound intellectual syntheses? How to fix your thoughts on some point, when around you everything moves, and you yourself are dragged along and tossed about each day by the impetuous current that drives everything?[g]

in free governments whose social state is democratic, there is hardly anyone who is not occupied by it. So among nations subject to these governments it must be expected that a kind of public scorn for the higher speculations of science and a kind of instinctive repulsion for those who devote themselves to them will be established.

I imagine that a people constituted like the Germans of today, among whom great civil liberty would be found, where enlightenment would be very widespread, where communal independence would not be unknown, but where great political liberty would not exist, would be in a more fortunate position than another to cultivate and to perfect the theoretical portion of the sciences; and I would not be surprised if, of all the countries of Europe, Germany soon became for this reason the principal center of higher human knowledge.

Despotism is hardly able to maintain what it finds existing, and by itself alone it has never produced anything great. So I am not talking about an enslaved nation, but about a people who would not be entirely master of itself.

Great political liberty seems to me so precious a thing in itself and so necessary to the guarantee of all other liberties that, as long as it does not disappear at the same time from all the countries of the earth, I am more or less sure of never inhabiting a country where it will not exist; but I cannot believe that, following the ordinary course of societies, great political liberty must favor the development of the general and theoretical part of the sciences. I recognize in it a thousand other advantages, but not that one (*Rubish,* 1).

g. "Of all branches of human studies, philosophy will be, if I am not mistaken, the one that will suffer most from the establishment of democracy. If the men whose social state and habits are democratic wanted to concern themselves with philosophy, I do not doubt that they would bring to this matter the boldness and the freedom of mind that

The type of permanent agitation that reigns within a tranquil and already constituted democracy must be clearly distinguished from the tumultuous and revolutionary movements that almost always accompany the birth and development of a democratic society.

When a violent revolution takes place among a very civilized people, it cannot fail to give a sudden impulse to sentiments and to ideas.

This is true above all of democratic revolutions, that, by moving at once all of the classes that make up a people, give birth at the same time to immense ambitions in the heart of each citizen.

If the French suddenly made such admirable progress in the exact sciences, at the very moment when they finally destroyed the remnants of the old feudal society, this sudden fertility must be attributed, not to democracy, but to the unparalleled revolution that accompanied its development. What occurred then was a particular fact; it would be imprudent to see in it the indication of a general law.

Great revolutions are not more common among democratic peoples than among other peoples; I am even led to believe that they are less so. But within these nations there reigns a small uncomfortable movement, a sort of incessant rotation of men that troubles and distracts the mind without enlivening or elevating it.

Not only do men who live in democratic societies devote themselves with difficulty to meditation, but also they naturally have little regard for it. The democratic social state and democratic institutions lead most men to act constantly; now, the habits of mind that are appropriate to action are not always appropriate to thought. The man who acts is often reduced to being content with approximation, because he would never reach the end of his plan if he wanted to perfect each detail. He must rely constantly on ideas that he has not had the leisure to study in depth, for he is helped much more by the expediency of the idea that he is using than by its rigorous correctness; and everything considered, there is less risk for him in making use of a few false principles, than in taking up his time establishing the

they display elsewhere. But you can believe that they will rarely want to concern themselves with it" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 66).

truth of all his principles. The world is not controlled by long, learned proofs. The rapid view of a particular fact, the daily study of the changing passions of the crowd, the chance of the moment and the skill to grab hold of it, decide all matters there.

So in centuries when nearly everyone acts, you are generally led to attach an excessive value to the rapid flights and to the superficial conceptions of the mind, and, on the contrary, to depreciate excessively its profound and slow work.

This public opinion influences the judgment of the men who cultivate the sciences; it persuades them that they can succeed in the sciences without meditation, or turns them away from those sciences that require it.[h]

There are several ways to study the sciences. You find among a host of men a selfish, mercenary and industrial taste for the discoveries of the mind that must not be confused with the disinterested passion that is aroused in the heart of a small number; there is a desire to utilize knowledge and a pure desire to know. I do not doubt that occasionally, among a few, an ardent and inexhaustible love of truth is born that feeds on itself and gives constant delight without ever being able to satisfy itself. It is this ardent, proud and disinterested love of the true that leads men to the abstract sources of truth in order to draw generative ideas from there.

If Pascal[j] had envisaged only some great profit, or even if he had been

h. The taste for well-being makes a multitude ask the sciences loudly for *applications* and recompenses with money and with glory those who find them.

And acting on the soul of scientists the multitude leads them to take their research in this direction and even makes them incapable of directing it elsewhere by taking from them the taste for non-material things that is the principal motivating force of the soul (*Rubish,* 1).

j. Different motives that can push men toward science.

Material interest.

Desire for glory.

Passion to discover the truth. Personal satisfaction that is impossible to define or to deny its effects.

Perhaps the greatest scientists are due uniquely to this last passion. For will is not enough to bring action; the mind must rush forward by itself toward the object; it must aspire.

moved only by the sole desire for glory, I cannot believe that he would ever have been able to summon up, as he did, all the powers of his intelligence to reveal more clearly the most hidden secrets of the Creator. When I see him, in a way, tear his soul away from the midst of the cares of life, in order to give it entirely to this inquiry, and, prematurely breaking the ties that hold the soul to the body, die of old age before reaching forty years of age, I stop dumbfounded; and I understand that it is not an ordinary cause that can produce such extraordinary efforts.

The future will prove if these passions, so rare and so fruitful, arise and develop as easily amid democratic societies as within aristocratic ones. As for me, I admit that I find it difficult to believe.

In aristocratic societies, the class that leads opinion and runs public affairs, being placed above the crowd in a permanent and hereditary way, naturally conceives a superb idea of itself and of man. It readily imagines glorious enjoyments for man and sets magnificent ends for his desires. Aristocracies often undertake very tyrannical and very inhuman actions, but they rarely conceive low thoughts; and they show a certain proud disdain for small pleasures, even when they give themselves over to them; that gives all souls there a very lofty tone. In aristocratic times, you generally get very vast ideas about the dignity, power and grandeur of man. These opinions influence those who cultivate the sciences, like all the others; it facilitates the natural impulse of the mind toward the highest regions of thought and naturally disposes the mind to conceive the sublime and nearly divine love of truth.

So the scientists of these times are carried toward theory, and it even often happens that they conceive an ill-considered scorn for application. "Archimedes," says Plutarch,[k] "had a heart so noble that he never deigned

Imagine Newton or Pascal in the middle of a democracy.

The soul is given a less lofty tone in democracies. It envisages the things of life from a lower perspective (in the *rubish* THE INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY ON LITERATURE, *Rubish,* 1).

k. This fragment appears in the *rubish* with this bibliographic reference: "Plutarch, *Vie de Marcellus,* p. 269, vol. III, translation of Augustus." The quotation, longer in the

to leave any written work on how to erect all of these war machines [<for which he gained glory and fame, not for human knowledge but rather for divine wisdom>]; and considering all of this science of inventing and making machines and generally any art that brings some utility when put into practice, as vile, low and mercenary, he used his mind and his study to write only things whose beauty and subtlety were in no way mixed with necessity." Such is the aristocratic aim of the sciences.

It cannot be the same among democratic nations.

[Among these peoples, the opinions of the class that governs and the general mores of the nation hardly ever raise the human mind toward theory; on the contrary they draw it every day toward application.]

Most of the men who compose these nations are very greedy for material and present enjoyments; since they are always discontent with the position that they occupy, and always free to leave it, they think only about the means to change their fortune or to increase it. [Men naturally have the desire to take pleasure quickly and easily, but that is particularly true of those who live in democracies.

This sentiment to which scientists themselves are not strangers leads them to look for the consequences of a principle already known rather than to find a new principle; their work is at the very same time easier and better understood.

The same sentiment makes the public attach much more value to applications than to abstract truths.][m] For minds so disposed, every new method that leads to wealth by a shorter road, every machine that shortens work, every instrument that reduces the costs of production, every discovery that facilitates and increases pleasures, seems the most magnificent effort of human intelligence. It is principally from this side that democratic peoples are attached to the sciences, understand them and honor

draft, contains a phrase that is missing from the book: ". . . so noble <and an understanding so profound in which there was a hidden treasure of so many geometric inventions>" (*Rubish,* 1).

m. This fragment is found on a separate sheet of the manuscript.

them.[n] In aristocratic centuries [v.: societies], people particularly demand enjoyments of the mind from the sciences; in democratic ones, those of the body.

Depend on the fact that the more a nation is democratic, enlightened and free, the larger the number of these self-seeking men who appreciate scientific genius will grow, and the more discoveries immediately applicable to industry will yield profit, glory and even power to their authors; for, in democracies, the class that works takes part in public affairs, and those who serve it have to look to it for honors as well as for money.

You can easily imagine that, in a society organized in this manner, the human mind is led imperceptibly to neglect theory and that it must, on the contrary, feel pushed with an unparalleled energy toward application, or at least toward the portion of theory necessary to those who do applications.

An instinctive tendency raises the human mind in vain toward the highest spheres of intelligence; interest leads it back toward the middle ones. That is where it puts forth its strength and restless activity, and brings forth miracles. These very Americans, who have not discovered a single one of the general laws of mechanics, have introduced to navigation a new machine that is changing the face of the world.

Certainly, I am far from claiming that the democratic peoples of today are destined to see the transcendent light of the human mind extinguished, or even that they must not kindle new light within their midst. At the age of the world in which we find ourselves and among so many lettered nations that are tormented incessantly by the ardor of industry, the ties that bind the different parts of science together cannot fail to be striking; and the very taste for application, if it is enlightened, must lead men not to neglect theory. In the middle of so many attempts at application, so many experiments repeated each day, it is often nearly impossible for very general laws

n. "So if it happens in the United States that there is no innovation in philosophy, in literature, in science, in the fine arts, that does not come from the fact that the social state of the Americans is democratic, but rather from the fact that their passions are exclusively commercial" (YTC, CVj, 1, p. 91).

not to happen to appear; so that great discoveries would be frequent, even though great inventors were rare.

I believe moreover in high scientific vocations. If democracy does not lead men to cultivate the sciences for their own sake, on the other hand it immensely increases the number of those who cultivate the sciences. It cannot be believed that, among so great a multitude, there is not born from time to time some speculative genius inflamed by the sole love of truth. You can be sure that the latter will work hard to penetrate the most profound mysteries of nature, whatever the spirit of his country and of his time. There is no need to aid his development; it is enough not to stop it. All that I want to say is this: permanent inequality of conditions leads men to withdraw into proud and sterile research for abstract truths; while the democratic social state and democratic institutions dispose them to ask of the sciences only their immediate and useful applications.

This tendency is natural and inevitable. It is interesting to know it, and it can be necessary to point it out.

If those who are called to lead the nations of today saw clearly and from a distance these new instincts that will soon be irresistible, they would understand that with enlightenment and liberty, the men who live in democratic centuries cannot fail to improve the industrial portion of the sciences, and that henceforth all the effort of the social power must go to sustain the theoretical sciences and to create great scientific passions.

Today, the human mind must be kept to theory, it runs by itself toward application, and instead of leading it back constantly toward the detailed examination of secondary effects, it is good to distract it sometimes in order to raise it to the contemplation of first causes.

Because Roman civilization died following the invasion of the barbarians, we are perhaps too inclined to believe that civilization cannot die otherwise.

If the light that enlightens us ever happened to go out, it would grow dark little by little and as if by itself. By dint of limiting yourself to application, you would lose sight of principles, and when you had entirely forgotten the principles, you would badly follow the methods that derive from them; no longer able to invent new methods, you would employ with-

out intelligence and without art the learned processes that you no longer understood.

When the Europeans reached China three hundred years ago, they found all the arts at a certain degree of perfection, and they were astonished that, having arrived at this point, the Chinese had not advanced more. Later they discovered the vestiges of some advanced knowledge that had been lost. The nation was industrial; most of the scientific methods were preserved within it; but science itself no longer existed. That explained to the Europeans the singular type of immobility in which they found the mind of the people. The Chinese, while following the path of their fathers, had forgotten the reasons that had guided the latter. They still used the formula without looking for the meaning; they kept the instrument and no longer possessed the art of modifying and of reproducing it. So the Chinese could not change anything. They had to give up improvement. They were forced to imitate their fathers always and in all things, in order not to throw themselves into impenetrable shadows, if they diverged for an instant from the road that the latter had marked. The source of human knowledge had nearly dried up; and although the river still flowed, it could no longer swell its waves or change its course.

China had subsisted peacefully for centuries however; its conquerors had taken its mores; order reigned there. A sort of material well-being was seen on all sides. Revolutions there were very rare, and war was so to speak unknown.[o]

So you must not feel reassured by thinking that the barbarians are still far from us; for if there are some peoples who allow light to be wrested from their hands, there are others who trample it underfoot themselves.[p]

o. With a note, in the manuscript: "<Louis says that he is afraid that this last piece, although good, appears a bit exaggerated given the current state of our notions on China. It now seems certain, he says, that if the Chinese have declined, they have at least never been as advanced as I suppose and as was supposed in Europe sixty years ago.>"

p. In the *rubish:*

> Louis said to me today (1 June 1838) that what had struck him as more obvious and more clear in the question of the sciences was that the applied sciences or the theoretical part of the sciences most necessary to application had, in all times, been cultivated among men as the taste for material enjoyments, for individual improvements

increased, while the cultivation of the advanced sciences had always been joined with a certain taste for intellectual pleasures which found pleasure in encountering great truths, even if they were useless.

This seemed to him applicable to aristocratic peoples like the English or the men of the Middle Ages, in the period of the Renaissance, although some were occupied in this period with the things of heaven; it is clear however that there was a reaction toward the things of the earth. But he admitted that democracy drove this taste and that it could thus be considered as the mediate cause of this scientific impulse whose immediate cause would be the taste for material enjoyments./

It seems clear to me that I do not make the *taste for material well-being* suggested by this social and political state play a large enough role among the causes that lead democracies toward the applied sciences. It is however the greatest, the most incontestable, the truest reason. I have not precisely omitted it, but under-played it. This gap must be repaired. See note (a, b, c).

To cite England. The taste for well-being taking hold of the democratic classes would give these classes, thanks to liberty and commercial possibilities, a great preponderance, allowing them in a way to give their spirit to the nation, while letting the aristocratic classes subsist in its midst. What follows for [the (ed.)] sciences.

Still more intense taste; class that feels it still more preponderant in America. Practical impulse of the sciences still more exclusive.

[In the margin: Another point of view that is not sufficiently appreciated.

Peoples who have strongly devoted themselves to the application of something, very practically occupied with something, find neither the *time* nor the *taste* to be occupied with theory. I said something similar while talking about the sciences among free peoples. But I was talking only about taste.

It is clear that an aristocracy, like a democracy, can be constantly occupied in a practical way with something and neglect all the rest. It is the case of the Romans who were so devoted to the conquest of the world that they were not able to think about the sciences. They have left nothing on that. While the Greeks more *divided* made great scientific progress./

How many things are explained by the taste for material well-being!!] (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER II[a]

In What Spirit the Americans Cultivate the Arts[b]

I believe it would be wasting my time and that of my readers, if I applied myself to showing how the general mediocrity of fortune, the lack of superfluity, the universal desire for well-being and the constant efforts made by each person to gain well-being for himself, make the taste for the useful

a. 1. Democratic institutions and the democratic social state make the human mind tend toward the useful rather than toward the beautiful as regards art. I set forth this idea without proving it. The rest of the chapter comments on it or adds to it.

2. 1. In aristocracies, artisans, apart from the desire to earn money, have their individual reputation and the reputation of their corps to maintain. The aim of the arts is to make a small number of masterpieces, rather than a large number of imperfect works. It is no longer so when each profession no longer forms one corps and constantly changes members.

2. In aristocracies, consumers are few, very rich and very demanding. In democracies, they are very many, in straitened circumstances and nearly always with more needs than means. Thus the nature of the producer and of the consumer combine to increase the production of the arts and to decrease their merit.

3. An analogous tendency of the arts in democratic times is to simulate in their products a richness that is not there.

4. In the fine arts in particular, the democratic social state and democratic institutions make the aim the elegant and the pretty rather than the great; the representation of the body rather than that of the soul; they turn away from the ideal and concentrate on the real (YTC, CVf, pp. 12–13).

b. "Among the fine arts I clearly see something to say only about architecture, sculpture, painting. As for music, dance . . . , I see nothing" (in the *rubish* of chapter 5. *Rubish,* 1).

Tocqueville seems not to have appreciated the musical evenings that he attended in the United States. In his correspondence, he speaks of "caterwauling music" and "unbearable squealings." Beaumont thought it good to delete these commentaries from his edition of Tocqueville's complete works.

predominate over the love of the beautiful in the heart of man. Democratic nations, where all these things are found, will therefore cultivate the arts that serve to make life comfortable in preference to those whose object is to embellish it; they will by habit prefer the useful to the beautiful, and they will want the beautiful to be useful.[c]

But I intend to go further, and, after pointing out the first feature, to outline several others.

It happens ordinarily, in centuries of privilege, that the exercise of nearly all the arts becomes a privilege and that each profession is a world apart where no one is at liberty to enter. And, even when industry is free, the immobility natural to aristocratic nations makes all those who are occupied by the same art end up nevertheless forming a distinct class, always composed of the same families, all of whose members know each other and a class in which public opinion and corporate pride soon arise. In an industrial class of this type, each artisan has not only his fortune to make, but also his reputation to keep. It is not only his interest that regulates his behavior, or even that of the buyer, but that of the corps, and the interest of the corps is that each artisan produces masterpieces. So in aristocratic centuries, the aim of the arts is to make the best possible, and not the most rapid or the cheapest.[d]

c. What makes the taste for the *useful* predominate among democratic peoples./

[In the margin: Perhaps to philosophy. What makes the doctrine of the useful predominate.

Utilitarians.]

This idea is necessary, but perhaps it has already been treated either under this title or under another. *It must be treated separately.* It is too important to be found only accidentally in my book. The preeminence granted in all things to the useful is in fact one of the principal and fertile characteristics of democratic centuries.

There are many things that make the taste for the useful predominate in these centuries: the middling level of fortunes, the lack of superfluity, the lack of imagination or rather the perpetual straining for the production of well-being. There is imagination in the ordinary sense of the word only in the upper and lower classes; the middle ones do not have it.

There are still many other causes. Look for them.

12 April 1838 (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 10).

d. You find in aristocratic societies as well as in democracies men who cultivate the useful arts, and who even excel if not in all at least in several of them. It suffices to

When on the contrary each profession is open to all, when the crowd enters and leaves each constantly, and when its different members, because of their great number, become unknown, indifferent and nearly invisible to each other, the social bond is destroyed, and each worker, led back to himself, seeks only to earn the greatest amount of money possible at the least cost. There is nothing more than the will of the consumer to limit him. Now it happens that, at the same time, a corresponding revolution makes itself felt among the last.

In countries where wealth, like power, is concentrated in a few hands and remains there, the use of most of the wealth of this world belongs to always the same small number of individuals; necessity, opinion, the moderation of desires exclude all others.

Since this aristocratic class keeps itself immobile at the point of grandeur where it is placed, without narrowing or expanding, it always experiences the same needs and feels them in the same way. The men who compose it draw naturally from the superior and hereditary position that they occupy the taste for what is very well made and very lasting.

That gives a general turn to the ideas of the nation as regards the arts.

It often happens, among these peoples, that the peasant himself prefers to do entirely without the objects that he covets than to acquire them imperfect.

So in aristocracies, workers labor only for a limited number of buyers, who are very difficult to satisfy. The gain that they expect depends principally on the perfection of their works.

This is no longer so when, all privileges being destroyed, ranks mingle and all men constantly go down and rise up the social scale.

You always find, within a democratic people [≠and particularly in the period when they finally come to be so≠], a host of citizens whose patrimony divides and decreases. They have contracted, in better times, certain

see a few of the engraved breast-plates that the warriors of the Middle Ages left for us, and the gothic churches that still seem to thrust into the sky from the heart of our cities, in order to understand that the armorers and the masons of those times were often skilled men.

But they did not bring to their works the same spirit as the artisans of today (*Rubish,* 1).

needs that they continue to have after the ability to satisfy them no longer exists, and they try restlessly to find if there is not some indirect means to provide for them.

On the other hand, you always see in democracies a very large number of men whose fortune grows, but whose desires grow very much faster than their fortune and who greedily eye the goods that their fortune promises them, before it delivers them. These men try to open in all directions shorter paths to these nearby enjoyments. The result of the combination of these two causes is that in democracies you always meet a multitude of citizens whose needs are beyond their resources and who would readily agree to being satisfied incompletely rather than renouncing entirely the object of their covetous desire.

The worker easily understands these passions because he shares them himself. In aristocracies, he tried to sell his products very expensively to a few; now he understands that there would be a more expedient means to become rich, it would be to sell his products inexpensively to all [<for he begins to discover that a small profit that is repeated every day would be preferable to a considerable gain that you can expect only rarely.>

That sets his mind on a new path. He no longer tries to make the best possible but at the lowest price.].

Now, there are only two ways to arrive at lowering the price of merchandise.

The first is to find better, shorter and more skillful means of producing it.[e] The second is to fabricate in greater quantity objects more or less similar, but of less value. Among democratic peoples, all the intellectual abilities of the worker are directed toward these two ends.

He tries hard to invent procedures that allow him to work, not only better, but faster and at less cost, and if he cannot manage to do so, to reduce the intrinsic qualities of the thing that he is making without making it entirely inappropriate to its intended use. When only the rich had watches,

e. "Democracy leads toward the useful arts not so much because it decreases the number of those who could have demands to make on the fine arts as because it takes away from the latter even the taste to seek the beautiful in the arts" (in RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE ARTS, *Rubish,* 1).

nearly all were excellent. Now hardly any are made that are not mediocre, but everyone has them. Thus, democracy not only tends to direct the human mind toward the useful arts, it leads artisans to make many imperfect things very rapidly, and leads the consumer to content himself with these things.

It isn't that in democracies art is not capable, as needed, of producing marvels. That is revealed sometimes, when buyers arise who agree to pay for time and effort. In this struggle of all the industries, amid this immense competition and these innumerable trials, excellent workers are formed who get to the furthest limits of their profession. But the latter rarely have the opportunity to show what they know how to do; they carefully moderate their efforts. They stay within a skillful mediocrity that is self-assessing and that, able to go beyond the goal that it sets for itself, aims only for the goal that it attains. In aristocracies, in contrast, workers always do all that they know how to do, and, when they stop, it is because they are at the limit of their knowledge.

When I arrive in a country and I see the arts provide some admirable products, that teaches me nothing about the social state and political constitution of the country.[f] But if I notice that the products of the arts there

f. That the perfection of certain products of the arts is not a proof of civilization./

The Mexicans that Cortés conquered so easily had reached a high degree of perfection in the manufacture of cotton. Their fabrics and the colors with which they covered them were admirable, p. 64.

In India cotton fabrics and particularly muslins have always been made and are still made whose softness, brilliance, and toughness, Europeans, with all the perfection of their arts, are still not able to imitate, p. 61.

India, however, is still in a state of semi-barbarism.

The fact is that the perfection of an isolated art proves nothing, only that the people who cultivate it have emerged from the state of a hunting or pastoral people. In this state nothing can be perfected.

Another curious fact that Baines' book provides me with is that the beautiful muslins of Dana were in all their splendor only while India had kings and an aristocracy. They have been in decline since, because of a lack of orders, p. 61 (*Rubish,* 1).

Edward Baines, *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher and P. Jackson, 1835). Reprinted in New York by Augustus M. Kelly, 1966 (Reprints of Economics Classics).

are generally imperfect, in very great number and at a low price, I am sure that, among the people where this is occurring, privileges are becoming weak, and the classes are beginning to mingle and are soon going to blend.[g]

Artisans who live in democratic centuries not only seek to put their useful products in the reach of all citizens, they also try hard to give all their products shining qualities that the latter do not have.

In the confusion of all classes, each man hopes to be able to appear to be what he isn't and devotes great efforts to succeeding in doing so. Democracy does not give birth to this sentiment, which is only too natural to the heart of man; but it applies it to material things. The hypocrisy of virtue exists in all times; that of luxury belongs more particularly to democratic centuries.

In order to satisfy these new needs of human vanity, there is no imposture to which the arts do not resort; industry sometimes goes so far in this direction that it ends by harming itself. The diamond has already been so perfectly imitated that it is easy to make a mistake. Once the art of producing false diamonds has been invented so that you can no longer distinguish false from true ones, both will probably be abandoned, and they will again become stones.

This leads me to talk about those arts that are called, par excellence, the fine arts.

I do not believe that the necessary effect of the democratic social state and democratic institutions is to decrease the number of men who cultivate the fine arts. [<I even think that their number increases with democracy>]; but these causes powerfully influence the manner in which they are cultivated. Since most of those who had already contracted the taste for the fine arts have become poor, and, on the other hand, many of those who are not yet rich have begun, by imitation, to conceive the taste for the fine arts, the quantity of consumers in general increases, and very rich and

g. "So democracy draws a multitude of mediocre products from the arts, but these products are sufficient for the well-being of a multitude of our fellows, while more perfect works would serve only a small number" (in RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE ARTS, *Rubish,* 1).

very refined consumers become more rare. Something analogous to what I already demonstrated when I talked about the useful arts then occurs in the fine arts. They multiply their works and reduce the merit of each one of them.

No longer able to aim at the great, you seek the elegant and the pretty; you tend less to reality than to appearance.

In aristocracies you do a few great paintings, and, in democratic countries, a multitude of small pictures. In the first, you raise bronze statues, and, in the second, you cast plaster statues.

When I arrived for the first time in New York by the part of the Atlantic Ocean called the East River, I was surprised to notice, along the river bank, at some distance from the city, a certain number of small palaces of white marble,[h] several of which were of a classical architecture; the next day, able to consider more closely the one that had particularly attracted my attention, I found that its walls were of white-washed brick and its columns of painted wood. It was the same for all the buildings that I had admired the day before.

The democratic social state and democratic institutions give as well, to all the imitative arts, certain particular tendencies that are easy to point out. [<I know that here I am going back to ideas that I have already had the occasion to explain in relation to poetry, but the fault is due less to me than to the subject that I am treating. I am talking about man and man is a simple being, whatever effort is made to split him up in order to know him better. It is always the same individual that you envisage in various lights. All that I can do is only to point out the result here, leaving to the memory of the reader the trouble of going back to the causes.>][j] They often divert them from portraying the soul in order to attach them only to portraying the

h. ". . . an incredible multitude of country houses, as large as little boxes but as carefully worked . . . I was so struck by how comfortable these small houses had to be and by the good effect that they produced on the landscape, that I will try to obtain the design or the plan of one or two of the prettiest ones. Perhaps Émilie would make use of it for Nacqueville. I already know that they are not expensive." (Extract of the letter from Tocqueville to his mother, of 26 April–19 May 1831, YTC, BIa2.) Pocket notebook 1 in fact contains the plan of one of these houses (YTC, BIIa, pp. 2–3).

j. In the margin: "To delete if I put this piece before poetry."

body; and they substitute the representation of movements and sensations for that of sentiments and ideas; in the place of the ideal, finally, they put the real.

I doubt that Raphael made as profound a study of the slightest mechanisms of the human body as the artists of today. He did not attribute the same importance as they to rigorous exactitude on this point, for he claimed to surpass nature. He wanted to make man something that was superior to man; he undertook to embellish beauty itself.

David and his students were, on the contrary, as good anatomists as painters. They represented marvelously well the models that they had before their eyes, but rarely did they imagine anything beyond; they followed nature exactly, while Raphael sought something better than nature. They left us an exact portrait of man, but the first gave us a glimpse of divinity in his works.

You can apply to the very choice of subject what I said about the manner of treating it.

The painters of the Renaissance usually looked above themselves, or far from their time, for great subjects that left a vast scope to their imagination. Our painters often lend their talent to reproducing exactly the details of the private life that they have constantly before their eyes, and on all sides they copy small objects that have only too many originals in nature.[k]

k. They hasten [to (ed.)] depict battles before the dead are buried and they enjoy exposing to our view scenes that we witness every day.

I do not know when people will tire of comparing the democracy of our time with what bore the same name in antiquity. The differences between these two things reveal themselves at every turn. For me, I do not need to think about slavery or other reasons that lead me to regard the Greeks as very aristocratic nations despite some democratic institutions that are found in their midst. I agree not to open Aristotle to finish persuading me. It is enough for me to contemplate the statues that these peoples have left. I cannot believe that the man who made the Belvedere Apollo emerge from marble worked in a democracy.

[In the margin. Next to the last paragraph.] To delete. That I think raises useless objections (in the *rubish* of the chapter that follows, *Rubish,* 1).

For his part, Beaumont had written: "There exists, in the United States, a type of painting that prospers: these are portraits; it is not the love of art, it is self-love" (*Marie,* I, p. 254).

CHAPTER 12[a]

Why the Americans Erect Such Small and Such Large Monuments at the Same Time

I have just said that, in democratic centuries, the monuments of art tended to become more numerous and smaller. I hasten to point out the exception to this rule.

Among democratic peoples, individuals are very weak; but the State, which represents them all and holds them all in its hand, is very strong.[b] Nowhere do citizens appear smaller than in a democratic nation. Nowhere does the nation itself seem greater and nowhere does the mind more easily form a vast picture of it. In democratic societies, the imagination of men narrows when they consider themselves; it expands indefinitely when they think about the State. The result is that the same men who live meanly in cramped dwellings often aim at the gigantic as soon as it is a matter of public monuments.[c]

a. 1. In democratic societies, individuals are very weak, but the State is very great. The imagination narrows when you think about yourself; it expands immeasurably when you turn your attention to the State.

In those societies, you see a small number of very small monuments and a multitude of very large ones.

Example of the Americans proves it.

2. Nor do large monuments prove anything about the prosperity, the enlightenment and the real greatness of the nation.

Example of the Mexicans and the Romans shows it (YTC, CVf, pp. 13–14).

b. In a note: "It is their very weakness that makes its strength . . .

"A piece from *ambition* could go well there."

c. "In democracies the State must take charge of large and costly works not only because these large works are beautiful, but also in order to sustain the taste for what is great and for perfection" (in RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE ARTS, *Rubish,* 1).

The Americans have laid out on the site that they wanted to make into the capital the limits of an immense city that, still today, is hardly more populated than Pontoise, but that, according to them, should one day contain a million inhabitants; already they have uprooted trees for ten leagues around, for fear that they might happen to inconvenience the future citizens of this imaginary metropolis. They have erected, in the center of the city, a magnificent palace to serve as the seat of Congress, and they have given it the pompous name of the Capitol.

Every day, the particular states themselves conceive and execute prodigious undertakings that would astonish the genius of the great nations of Europe.

Thus, democracy does not lead men only to make a multitude of petty works; it also leads them to erect a small number of very large monuments. But between these two extremes there is nothing. So a few scattered remnants of very vast structures tell nothing about the social state and institutions of the people who erected them.

I add, although it goes beyond my subject, that they do not reveal their greatness, their enlightenment and their real prosperity any better.

Whenever a power of whatever kind is capable of making an entire people work toward a sole undertaking, it will succeed with little knowledge and a great deal of time in drawing something immense from the combi-

In Beaumont's papers you find this note drafted during the journey that they made together to England in 1835:

> Aristocracy. Democracy.
>
> Public institutions./
>
> One thing strikes me when I examine the public institutions in England: it is the extreme luxury of their construction and maintenance. In the United States I saw the government of democracy do most of its institutions with an extreme economy. Example: prisons, hospitals. It seems to me that these institutions cannot be done more cheaply. In England it is entirely the opposite: the government or the administration appears to try to construct everything at the greatest possible expense. What magnificence in the construction of Milbank! What luxury in the slightest details!! 20 million francs spent to hold 2,000 prisoners! And Beldlan [Bedlam (ed.)]! for 250 of the insane, 2 million 500 thousand francs (cost of construction), 200,000 pounds sterling. Isn't it the spirit of aristocracies to do everything with grandeur, with luxury, with splendor, and with great expenditures! And Greenwich! And Chelsea!
>
> (14 May [1835], London) (YTC, Beaumont, CX).

nation of such great efforts; you do not have to conclude from that that the people is very happy, very enlightened or even very strong.[d] The Spanish found the city of Mexico full of magnificent temples and vast palaces; this did not prevent Cortez from conquering the Mexican Empire with six hundred foot soldiers and sixteen horses.

If the Romans had known the laws of hydraulics better, they would not have erected all these aqueducts that surround the ruins of their cities; they would have made better use of their power and their wealth. If they had discovered the steam engine, perhaps they would not have extended to the extreme limits of their empire those long artificial stone lines that are called roman roads.

These things are magnificent witnesses to their ignorance at the same time as to their grandeur.

d. Many men judge the state of the civilization of a people by its monuments, that is a very uncertain measure.

I will admit that it proves that these peoples were more aristocratic, but not that they were more civilized and greater.

Ruins of Palenque in Mexico. Mexicans who still knew only hieroglyphic writing and vanquished so easily by the Spanish (*Rubish* of the previous chapter, *Rubish,* 1).

In 1845, concerning French monuments, Tocqueville made the following reflection to his friend Milnes:

> France has the appearance of noticing since only ten years ago, that it is still covered with masterpieces of the Middle Ages. The idea of repairing them, of completing them, of preserving them above all from complete ruin preoccupies a great number of cities, several of which have already made great sacrifices. Do not conclude from it that society is returning to old ideas and institutions. It is the sign of precisely the opposite. Nothing indicates better that the Revolution is finished and that the old society is dead. As long as the war between the old France and the new France presented for the first the least chance of success, the nation treated the monuments of the Middle Ages like adversaries; it destroyed them or left them to perish; it saw in them only the physical representation of the doctrines, beliefs, mores and laws that were hostile to it. In the middle of this preoccupation, it did not even notice their beauty. It is because it no longer fears anything from what they represent that it is attached to them as if to great works of art and to curious remnants of a time that no longer exists. The archeologist has replaced the party man (Paris, letter of 14 April 1845. With the kind permission of Trinity College, Cambridge. Houghton papers, 25/201).

People who would leave no other traces of their passage than a few lead pipes in the earth and a few iron rods on its surface could have been more masters of nature than the Romans.[e]

e. The *rubish* continues:

> Large monuments belong to the middle state of civilization rather than to a very advanced civilization. Man ordinarily erects them when his thoughts are already great and his knowledge is still limited and when he does not yet know how to satisfy it except at great expense.
>
> On the other hand, the ruins of a few large monuments cannot teach us if the social state of the people who erected them was aristocratic or democratic since we have just seen that democracy happens to build similar ones.

In the rough drafts of the previous chapter: "They [large monuments (ed.)] are the product of centralization. Here introduce the thought that centralization is not at all the sign of high civilization. It is found neither at the beginning nor at the end of civilization, but in general at the middle" (RUBISH OF CHAPTERS ON THE ARTS, *Rubish,* 1).

And in another place in the same jacket: "Large monuments prove nothing but the destruction of large monuments proves. Warwick castle, *aristocratic.* Cherbourg sea wall, *democratic"* (*rubish* of the previous chapter. *Rubish,* 1). It was during his stay in England in 1833 that Tocqueville visited the ruins of Warwick castle, setting for *Kenilworth* of Walter Scott. To his future wife, Mary Mottley, he sent a short account of his visit entitled *Visit to Kenilworth* (YTC, CXIb, 12, reproduced in *OCB,* VII, pp. 116–19).

CHAPTER 13[a]

Literary Physiognomy of Democratic Centuries

When you enter the shop of a bookstore in the United States, and when you go over the American books that fill their shelves, the number of works appears very large, while that of known authors seems in contrast very small.[b]

a. 1. The Americans do not have literature so to speak. All their literary works come to them from England, or are written according to English taste.

2. This is due to particular and temporary causes and must not prevent us from searching for what the literature natural to democracy is.

3. All ranks are marked and men immobile in their places, literary life like political existence is concentrated in an upper class. From that fixed rules, traditional literary habits, art, delicacy, finished details, taste for style, for form . . .

4. When ranks are mixed, men of talent and writers have diverse origins, a different education, they constantly change, only a little time can be given to the pleasures of the mind. . . . From that, absence of rules, scorn for style, rapidity, fertility, liberty.

5. There is a moment when the literary genius of democracy and that of aristocracy join, short and brilliant period, French literature of the XVIIIth century (YTC, CVf, pp. 14–15).

b. In the *Rubish,* under the title INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY ON LITERATURE, the chapter begins in this way: "≠I am speaking about America and America does not yet so to speak have literature, but the subject attracts me and holds me. I cannot pass by without stopping≠. When you enter . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

Another title of the chapter, still in the *Rubish,* was this one: GENERAL IDEAS ON THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY EQUALITY ON LITERATURE. The initial plan of Tocqueville probably included this sole chapter that, becoming too long, was subsequently divided. The rough drafts of this chapter and of those that follow, up to chapter 18, are found in several jackets; the contents do not always coincide with the title.

The reflections of Tocqueville on literature have given rise to various commentaries: Katherine Harrison, "A French Forecast of American Literature," *South Atlantic Quar-*

First you find a multitude of elementary treatises intended to give the first notion of human knowledge. Most of these works were written in Europe. The Americans reprint them while adapting them to their use. Next comes a nearly innumerable quantity of books on religion, Bibles, sermons, pious stories, controversies, accounts of charitable institutions. Finally appears the long catalogue of political pamphlets: in America, parties, to combat each other, do not write books, but brochures that circulate with an unbelievable rapidity, live for a day and die.[c]

terly 25, no. 4 (1926): 350–56; Donald D. Kummings, "The Poetry of Democracies: Tocqueville's Aristocratic Views," *Comparative Literature Studies* 11, no. 4 (1974): 306–19; Reino Virtanen, "Tocqueville on a Democratic Literature," *French Review* 23, no. 3 (1950): 214–22; Paul West, "Literature and Politics. Tocqueville on the Literature of Democracies," *Essays in Criticism* 12, no. 3 (1972): 5–20; Françoise Mélonio and José-Luis Díaz, editors, *Tocqueville et la littérature* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2005).

c. "For these statistical details look in Beaumont" (*Rubish,* 1).

Cf. *Marie,* I, pp. 238–58. Beaumont always showed a more intense interest than Tocqueville in literature. At the time of their voyage in England in 1835, it is Beaumont who questioned J. S. Mill on the relationship between literature and democracy.

> Literature./
> Democracy./
> Conversation with John Mill, 18 June 1835. London./
> Question. Up to now I consider democracy as favorable to the material well-being of the greatest number, and from this perspective I am a partisan of it. But a shadow exists in my mind; a doubt troubles me. I do not know if the tendency of democracy is not anti-intellectual; it gives to the greatest number physical well-being; up to a certain point it is even a source of morality for all those whose condition it renders middling, either by destroying great wealth, which corrupts, or by bringing an end to great poverty, which degrades and debases; it also spreads more general, more uniform instruction. There are its benefits; but to what point is it not contrary to the taste for literature, to the development of the advanced sciences, to speculative studies, to intellectual meditations? In order to devote oneself to the love of literature and the pleasures of the mind, leisure is necessary, and who possesses leisure if not the rich? The man who works to live, does he find the leisure to think? Does he have the time, the taste and the ability for it? Isn't it to be feared that at the same time that common instruction spreads among the greatest number, advanced instruction will be abandoned, that the taste for literature will be lost, and that only useful books will be read? that no one will be interested in theories and speculation? that you will think only of application, and no longer of invention?

Amid all of these obscure productions of the human mind appear the more remarkable works of only a small number of authors who are known by Europeans or who should be.[d]

Answer. I believe that the tendency of democracy is diametrically opposed to the fear that you express. Here we see, as an argument in favor of democracy, the impulse that it gives to the taste for letters and intellectual things. It is true that as democracy spreads, the number of those who work in order to exist increases; at the same time the number of persons with leisure decreases. But it is precisely on this fact that we base our belief. We consider it as a fact established by experience that the men who work the most are those who read and think more; while idle men neither read nor think. The man who does nothing and whose whole life is leisure rarely finds the time to do anything. For him, reading is a trial, and three quarters and a half of the rich do not read a volume a year; they are moreover constantly busy with little nothings, with small interests of luxury, dress, horses, wealth, frivolous cares that are distractions rather than occupations. For them it is such a great difficulty to expand their mind for a single instant that writing the least letter seems a trial, reading the least work is an onerous burden (YTC, Beaumont, CX).

d. "<≠These are the works of Mr. Irving, the novels of Mr. Cooper, the eloquent treatises of Doctor Channing≠>" (*Rubish,* 1).

Unpublished travel note from small notebook A:

Books interesting and good to buy:

1. *Stories of American Life,* by American Writers, edited by Mary Russell Mitford (Colburn and Bentley: London, 1831), 3 vols. A worthwhile review is given in *Westminster Review,* April 1831, page 395. They include portrayals of three types: 1. Historical life or life sixty years ago. 2. Border life that is the life of the outer settlements. 3. City life which embraces pictures of masses as they exist at this moment in New York, Philadelphia and the great towns (small notebook A, YTC, BIIa).

Tocqueville does not appear to have read this book.

Tocqueville and Beaumont would have been able to have a conversation with the writer Catherine Maria Sedgwick, of whom they had heard a great deal spoken. But, impatient to reach Boston, they just missed her at Stockbridge (George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 349–50). Tocqueville seems to have read the letters of Cooper. In travel notebook E, you read: "Find Cooper's letters" (YTC, BIIa, different reading in *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 65). It probably concerns James Fenimore Cooper, *Notions of the Americans; Picked Up By a Travelling Bachelor* (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), 2 vols.

In an unpublished note (alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa) you find the following list: "Living American writers: Verplank—Paulding—Hall—Stone—Neal—Barker—Willis—Miss Sedgwick." It concerns the authors who are included in the book edited by Mary Russell Mitford, and who are cited in the preface of the work.

Although today America is perhaps the civilized country in which there is least involvement with literature,[e] a large number of individuals is found there who are interested in things of the mind and who make them, if not their whole life's work, at least the attraction of their leisure. But it is England that provides to the latter most of the books that they demand.[f] Nearly all of the great English works are reproduced in the United States. The literary genius of Great Britain still shines its light into the depths of the forests of the New World. There is scarcely a pioneer's cabin where you do not find a few odd volumes of Shakespeare. I recall having read for the first time the feudal drama of Henry V in a log house.[g]

In *Marie* (I, pp. 392–93) Beaumont cites the following American authors: Miss Sedgwick, James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, Jared Sparks, Robert Walsh, Edward Livingston, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Edward Everett, and William Ellery Channing. Reino Virtanen has suggested that Channing's *Remarks on National Literature* perhaps influenced the writing of these chapters on literature. See concerning Channing, Reino Virtanen, "Tocqueville and William Ellery Channing," *American Literature,* 22, 1951, pp. 21–28; and "Tocqueville and the Romantics," *Symposium* 13, no. 2 (1959): 167–85. William Ellery Channing, *The Importance and Means of a National Literature* (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1835), 31 pages, claims that the United States does not yet have literature and proposes means to create one.

Tocqueville could as well have been influenced by an article by Philarète Chasles, published under the title "De la littérature dans l'Amérique du Nord," which appeared in the *Revue des deux mondes,* volume III, 1835, pp. 169–202.

e. "The Americans are in the most unfavorable position for having a literature. A new people that each day finds at its disposal the literary works of an ancient people./

Democracy produces a host of bad works; but it does not prevent good ones" (*Rubish,* 1).

f. "Look in all the dictionaries for democracy, you will not find there the word *erudition"* (*Rubish,* 1).

g. I remember that one day, the pioneer was absent, and while awaiting his return, I took one of these volumes, isolated product of a genius of another hemisphere. Having opened it by chance, I fell upon the first part of the drama of Henry V [v: VI]. Time and the overly active curiosity of my hosts had almost destroyed the rest. During this reading I soon lost sight of the sentiment [of (ed.)] all that surrounded me and all the great characters evoked by the poet arose little by little around me. I thought I saw them with their language, their beliefs, their passions, their prejudices, their virtues and their vices.

All the memories of the heroic times of our history assailed me at the same time;

Not only do the Americans go each day to draw upon the treasures of English literature, but also you can truthfully say that they find the literature of England on their own soil.[h] Among the small number of men who are busy in the United States composing works of literature, most are English in content and above all in form. In this way they carry to the middle of democracy the ideas and the literary practices that are current within the aristocratic nation that they have taken as a model. They paint with colors borrowed from foreign mores; almost never representing in its reality the country where they were born, they are rarely popular there.

my imagination filled suddenly with the pomp of feudal society; I saw high turrets, a thousand banners waving in the air; I heard the sound of armor, the burst of clarions, the heavy step of caparisoned war horses. I contemplated for a moment all this mixture of misery and wealth, of strength and weakness, of inequality and grandeur that marked the Middle Ages, and then I opened my eyes and saw myself in my small log cabin built yesterday in the middle of a flowering wilderness that recalled the first days of the world and was inhabited by the descendants of these same Europeans who had become the obscure and peaceful citizens of a democratic republic. I felt gripped, passing my view alternately over these two extreme points of human destiny that I had before me. I was astonished by the immense space that stretched between [them (ed.)] and that humanity had had to cover.

Do you desire to see in all their clarity the extreme mobility and the strange detours of human destiny? Do you want, in a way, to see the raging and irresistible torrent of time flow before your eyes? Go sit down next to the hearth of the American pioneer and there read Shakespeare in the shadow of the virgin forest.

[In the margin] Read the books of Mr. Irving [that (ed.)] have all the merits and all the defects of a translation" (*Rubish,* 1).

h. In a first version:

<≠Mr. Fenimore Cooper borrowed his principal scenes from wild nature and not from democratic forms. He portrayed America as it no longer is, with colors foreign to the America of today. Mr. W. Irving is English in content as well as in form; he excels at representing with finesse and grace scenes borrowed from the aristocratic life of England. He is happy amid old feudal ruins and never borrows> anything from the country where he was born. The writers I am speaking about, despite their talent and the quarrelsome patriotism that they often try to use to *enhance* their efforts in the eyes of their fellow citizens, do not excite more real sympathies in the United States than if they were born in England. Thus, they live as little as they can in the country that they praise to us, and in order to enjoy their glory they come to Europe≠ (*Rubish,* 1).

[Read the books of Mr. W. Irving; there you will only find soft and pale reflections of a fire that is no longer seen and no longer felt {there you will find the qualities and the defects of a translation}].

The citizens of the United States themselves seem so convinced that books are not published for them, that before settling on the merit of one of their writers, they ordinarily wait for him to have been appreciated in England. This is how, in the case of paintings, you willingly leave to the author of the original the right to judge the copy.[j]

So the inhabitants of the United States do not yet have, strictly speaking, literature. The only authors that I recognize as Americans are journalists. The latter are not great writers, but they speak the language of the country and make themselves heard. I see only foreigners in the others. They are for the Americans what the imitators of the Greeks and the Romans were for us in the period of the renaissance of letters, an object of curiosity, not generally speaking of sympathy. They amuse the mind [<of a few>] and do not act on the mores [<of all>].

I have already said that this state of things was very far from being due only to democracy, and that it was necessary to look for the causes in several particular circumstances independent of democracy.

If the Americans, while still keeping their social state and their laws, had another origin and found themselves transported to another country, I do not doubt that they would have a literature. As they are, I am sure that in the end they will have one; but it will have a character different from the one that shows itself in the American writings of today, one that will be its own. It is not impossible to sketch this character in advance.

I suppose an aristocratic people among whom letters are cultivated [some of this type are found in the world]; the works of the mind, as well as the affairs of government, are regulated there by a sovereign class. Literary life,

j. First version: "America is moreover, taken in mass and despite its efforts to appear independent, still in relation to Europe in the position of a secondary city relative to the capital, and you notice, in its smallest ways of acting, this mixture of pride and servility that is nearly always found in the conduct of the provinces vis-à-vis their capital" (*Rubish,* 1).

like political existence, is concentrated nearly entirely in this class or in those closest to it. This is enough for me to have the key to all the rest.

When a small number of always the same men are involved at the same time in the same matters, they easily agree and decide in common on certain principal rules that must guide each one of them. If the matter that attracts their attention is literature, the works of the mind will soon be subjected by them to a few precise laws that you will no longer be allowed to avoid.

If these men occupy a hereditary position in the country, they will naturally be inclined not only to adopt a certain number of fixed rules for themselves, but also to follow those that their ancestors imposed on themselves; their set of laws will be rigorous and traditional at the same time.

Since they are not necessarily preoccupied with material things, since they have never been so, and since their fathers were not either, they were able over several generations to take an interest in works of the mind. They understood literary art and in the end they love it for itself and take a learned pleasure in seeing that you conform to it.

That is still not all; the men I am speaking about began their life and finish it in comfort or in wealth; so they have naturally conceived the taste for studied enjoyments and the love of refined and delicate pleasures.

In addition, a certain softness of mind and heart that they often contract amid this long and peaceful use of so many worldly goods, leads them to avoid in their very pleasures whatever could be found too unexpected and too intense. They prefer to be amused than to be intensely moved; they want to be interested, but not carried away.[k]

k. Do you want to clarify my thought by examples? Compare modern literature to that of antiquity.

What fertility, what boldness, what variety in our writings! What wisdom, what art, what perfection, what finish in those of the Greeks and Romans!

What causes the difference? I think of the large number of slaves who existed among the ancients, of the small number of masters, of the concentration of power and wealth in a few hands. This begins to enlighten me, but does not yet satisfy me, for the same causes are more or less found among us. Some more powerful reason is necessary. I discover it finally in the rarity and expense of books and the extreme difficulty of reproducing and circulating them. Circumstances, coming to concen-

Now imagine a great number of literary works executed by the men I have just described or for them, and you will easily conceive of a literature where everything is regulated and coordinated in advance. The least work will be meticulous in its smallest details; art and work will be seen in everything; each genre will have particular rules that it will not be free to depart from and that will isolate it from all the others.

The style will seem almost as important as the idea, form as content; the tone will be polished, moderate, elevated. The mind will always have a noble bearing, rarely a brisk pace, and writers will be more attached to perfection than to production.

It will sometimes happen that the members of the lettered class, since they live only with each other and write only for themselves, will entirely lose sight of the rest of the world; this will throw them into the affected and the false; they will make small literary rules for their sole use, which will imperceptibly turn them away from good sense and finally take them away from nature.

By dint of wanting to speak in a way other than common they attain a sort of aristocratic jargon[m] that is hardly less removed from fine language than the dialect of the people.

Those are the natural pitfalls of literature in aristocracies.

Every aristocracy that sets itself entirely apart from the people becomes powerless. That is true in letters as well as in politics.[1]

trate the taste for pleasures of the mind in a very small number, formed a small literary aristocracy of the elite within a large political aristocracy" (*Rubish,* 1).

m. Note in the manuscript: "Language of Bensserade and of Voiture. Hôtel de Rambouillet. Novel of Scudéry.

"Some *affected.*

"Others *coarse.*" Tocqueville had probably read P. L. Rœderer, *Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire de la société polie en France* (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1835).

1. *All of this is true above all in aristocratic countries that have been subject to the power of a king for a long time and peacefully.*

When liberty reigns in an aristocracy, the upper classes are constantly obliged to make use of the lower ones; and, by using them, they become closer to them. That often makes something of the democratic spirit penetrate within them. Moreover, among a privileged corps that governs, there develops an energy and habit of enterprise, a taste for movement and noise, that cannot fail to influence all literary works.

Now let us turn the picture around and consider the reverse side.

Let us take ourselves to a democracy whose ancient traditions and present enlightenment make it sensitive to the enjoyments of the mind. Ranks are mixed and confused; knowledge like power is infinitely divided and, if I dare say so, scattered in all directions.

Here is a confused crowd with intellectual needs to satisfy. These new amateurs of the pleasures of the mind have not all received the same education; they do not possess the same enlightenment, they do not resemble their fathers, and at every instant they differ from themselves; for they are constantly changing place, sentiments and fortune. So the mind of each one of them is not linked with that of all the others by common traditions and habits, and they have never had either the power, or the will, or the time to agree among themselves.

It is, however, from within this incoherent and agitated multitude that authors arise, and it is this multitude that distributes profits and glory to the latter.

It is not difficult for me to understand that, things being so, I must expect to find in the literature of such a people only a small number of those rigorous conventions that readers and writers recognize in aristocratic centuries. If it happened that the men of one period fell into agreement on a few, that would still prove nothing for the following period for, among democratic nations, each new generation is a new people. So among these nations, letters can be subjected to strict rules only with difficulty, and it is nearly impossible that they might ever be subjected to permanent rules.

In democracies, all the men who occupy themselves with literature are far from having received a literary education, and, of those among them able to have some smattering of literature, most follow a political career or embrace a profession from which they can turn away only for moments to sample surreptitiously the pleasures of the mind. So they do not make these pleasures the principal charm of their existence; but they consider them as a temporary and necessary relaxation amid the serious work of life. Such men can never acquire sufficiently advanced knowledge of literary art to sense its niceties; the small nuances escape them. Having only a very short time to give to letters, they want to turn it entirely to account. They love

books that can be obtained without difficulty, that are quickly read, that do not require learned research to be understood. They demand easy things of beauty that reveal themselves and that can be enjoyed at once; above all they must have the unexpected and the new. Accustomed to a practical, contentious, monotonous existence, they need intense and rapid emotions, sudden insights, striking truths or errors that immediately draw them out of themselves and introduce them suddenly and as if by violence into the middle of the subject.[n]

What more do I need to say about it? And, without my explaining it, who does not understand what is about to follow?

Taken as a whole, the literature of democratic centuries cannot present, as in the time of aristocracy, the image of order, regularity, science and art; form will ordinarily be neglected and sometimes scorned. Style will often appear bizarre, incorrect, overdone and dull, and almost always bold and vehement. Authors will aim for rapidity of execution rather than for perfection of details. Short writings will be more frequent than big books, spirit more frequent than erudition, imagination more frequent than depth. A rough and almost wild strength of thought will reign, and often there will be a very great variety and singular fertility in production. They will try to astonish rather than please, and will strive more to carry passions away than to charm taste.[o]

Writers will undoubtedly be found here and there who would like to take another path, and, if they have superior merit, they will succeed in being read, despite their faults and qualities. But these exceptions will be

n. *"Metaphysics.* Perhaps mystical by spirit of reaction" (*Rubish,* 1).

o. In the manuscript:

<Per[haps (ed.)] here piece B while removing what I say about style a few lines higher?>

B. Men who live in aristocracies have for style, as in general for all forms, a superstitious respect and an exaggerated love. It happens that they value experience and turns of phrase as much as thought. Those who live in democratic countries are on the contrary led to neglect style too much. Sometimes they show an imprudent scorn for it. There are some of them who think themselves philosophers in that and who are often nothing but coarse ignoramuses.

rare, and even those who, in the whole of their work, depart in this way from common practice, will always return to it in some details.[p]

I have just portrayed two extreme states; but nations do not go suddenly from the first to the second; they arrive there only gradually and through infinite nuances. During the passage that leads a lettered people from one to the other, a moment almost always occurs when as the literary genius of democracies meets that of aristocracies, both seem to want to reign in agreement over the human mind.

Those are transient, but very brilliant periods:[q] then you have fertility without exuberance, and movement without confusion [liberty in order]. Such was French literature of the XVIIIth century.[r]

p. "Irving is a model of aristocratic graces.

"Irving must not be considered as an image of democratic literature, but his great success in America proves that democracies themselves are sensitive to great literary merit, whatever it may be" (*Rubish,* 1).

In another place:

> The success of Mr. W. Irving in the United States is a proof of this. I know of nothing more firm and more gracious than the spirit of this author. Nothing more polished than his works. They form a collection of small tableaux painted with an infinite [v: admirable] delicacy. Not only has this particular merit not prevented Mr. Irving from gaining a great reputation in America, but evidently he owes it to this merit alone, for it would be difficult to find any other one in him (*Rubish,* 1).

q. "The most favorable moment for the development of the sciences, of literature and of the arts is when democracy begins to burst into the midst of an aristocratic society. Then you have movement amid order. Then humanity moves very rapidly, but like an army in battle, without breaking ranks and without discipline losing anything to ardor" (*Rubish,* 1).

r. In a letter of 31 July 1834 intended for Charles Stoffels and devoted to literature, Tocqueville formulated the following remarks concerning style:

> Buffon assuredly said something false when he claimed that style was the whole man, but certainly style makes a great part of the man. Show me books that have *remained,* having as sole merit the ideas that they contained. They are few. I do not even know of an example to cite, if not perhaps a few books whose style was of an extreme simplicity; this negative defect does not repulse the reader in an absolute way like the opposite vice. You find that the principal quality of style is to *paint* objects and to make them perceptible to the imagination. I am of the same opinion, but the difficulty is not seeing the goal but attaining it. It is this very desire to put the thought *in relief* that preoccupies all those who are involved in writing today and that makes

most of them fall into such great extravagances. Without having myself a style that satisfies me in any way, I have however studied a great deal and meditated for a long time about the style of others, and I am persuaded of what I am about to say to you. There is in the great French writers, whatever the period from which you take them, a certain characteristic turn of thought, a certain way of seizing the attention of readers that belongs to each of them. I believe that you come to the world with this particular character; or at least I admit that I see no way to acquire it; for if you want to imitate the particular technique of an author, you fall into what painters call pastiches; and if you do not want to imitate anyone, you are colorless. But there is a quality common to all writers; it serves in a way as the basis of their style; it is on this foundation that they each then place their own colors. This quality is quite simply *good sense.* Study all the writers left to us by the century of Louis XIV, that of Louis XV, and the great writers from the beginning of ours, such as Madame de Staël and M. de Chateaubriand, and you will find among all good sense as the base. So what is good sense applied to style? That would take a very long time to define. It is the care to present ideas in the simplest and easiest order to grasp. It is the attention given to presenting at the same time to the reader only one simple and clear point of view whatever the diversity of the matters treated by the book, so that the thought is [not (ed.)] so to speak on two ideas. It is the care to use words in their true sense, and as much as possible in their most limited and most certain sense, in a way that the reader always positively knows what object or what image you want to present to him. I know men so clever that, if you quibble with them on the sense of a sentence, they immediately substitute another one without so to speak changing a single word, each of them being *almost* appropriate for the thing. The former men can be good diplomats, but they will never be good writers. What I also call good sense applied to style is to introduce into *the illustrations* only things comparable to the matter that you want to show. This is better understood by examples. Everyone makes illustrations while speaking, as M. Jourdain made prose; the illustration is the most powerful means to put into relief the matter that you want to make known; but still it is necessary that there is some analogy with the matter, or at least that you understand clearly what type of analogy the author wants to establish between them. When Pascal, after depicting the grandeur of the universe, ends with this famous piece: "The world is an infinite sphere whose circumference is everywhere and whose center is nowhere," the soul is gripped by this image, and however gigantic the idea that it presents, the mind conceives it at the first stroke; the object that Pascal uses for his comparison is familiar; the reader knows perfectly the ordinary dimensions of it and the form; with modifications made by the writer, it becomes however an admirable object of comparison with the universe that extends without end around you like an immense circle whose center you think you occupy wherever you go. Pascal's thought makes (illegible word) so to speak and grasps in an exact and (illegible word) fashion what the mind itself cannot conceive. I do not know why I cited this example. I could have cited thousands of others. In the most innocent, most skillful or most delicate ideas of great writers you always see a foundation of good sense and reason that forms the base. I have allowed myself to go on speaking about this part of style more than

I would go beyond my thought, if I said that the literature of a nation is always subordinated to its social state and political constitution. I know that, apart from these causes, there are several others that give certain characteristics to literary works; but the former seem to me the principal ones.

The connections that exist between the social and political state of a people and the genius of its writers are always very numerous; whoever knows the one is never completely ignorant of the other.

others because that is where most of the writers of our time err and that is what makes a jargon of P. L. Courrier [Courier (ed.)] be called their style. . . . If you want to write well, you must above all read, while studying *from the viewpoint of style* those who have written the best. The most useful, without comparison, seem to me to be the prose writers of the century of Louis XIV. Not that you must imitate their *turn,* which is dated, but the base of their style is admirable. There, sticking out, you find all the principal qualities that have distinguished good styles in all centuries (YTC, CIc).

The ideas explained in these chapters scarcely differ from those of Chateaubriand, Sainte-Beuve or La Harpe. Tocqueville's literary tastes always included the classics of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, such as Pascal, Bossuet and Bourdaloue. In 1838, his readings included Rabelais, Plutarch, Cervantes, Machiavelli, Fontenelle, Saint-Evremond and the Koran. See Charles de Grandmaison, "Séjour d'Alexis de Tocqueville en Touraine," *Correspondant,* 114, 1879, p. 933; and the conversation with Senior on literature in *Correspondence and Conversations of Alexis de Tocqueville with Nassau William Senior* (London: H. S. King and Co., 1872), I, pp. 140–43.

CHAPTER 14[a]

Of the Literary Industry[b]

Democracy not only makes the taste for letters penetrate the industrial classes, it introduces the industrial spirit into literature.

[In aristocratic centuries you often take literature as a career, and in the others as a trade.]

In aristocracies, readers are particular and few; in democracies, it is less difficult to please them, and their number is prodigious. As a result, among aristocratic peoples, you can hope to succeed only by immense efforts, and these efforts which can bring a great deal of glory cannot ever gain much money; while among democratic nations, a writer can hope to obtain with-

a. Democracy not only makes the taste for letters penetrate the industrial classes, it introduces the industrial spirit into literature.

Since readers are very numerous and very easy to satisfy because of the absolute need that they have for something new, you can make your fortune by constantly producing a host of new but imperfect works. You thus easily enough attain a small glory and a great fortune.

Democratic literatures for a small number of great writers swarm with sellers of ideas (YTC, CVf, p. 15).

b. On the jacket of the chapter: "Small chapter that seems to me too short (given its merit) and that must, I believe, be combined or even destroyed." In the manuscript you also find a draft of the chapter, but no *rubish* exists for it. The central idea of this chapter, as Reino Virtanen ("Tocqueville and the Romantics," *Symposium* 13, no. 2, 1959, p. 180) has remarked, recalls the article of Sainte-Beuve, "De la littérature industrielle," *Revue des deux mondes,* 19, 1839, pp. 675–91. Cf. *Marie,* I, p. 248.

out much cost a mediocre fame and a great fortune.[c] For that, he does not have to be admired; it is enough that he is enjoyed.[d]

The always growing crowd of readers and the continual need that they have for something new assures the sales of a book that they hardly value.

In times of democracy, the public often acts toward authors like kings ordinarily do toward their courtiers; it enriches them and despises them. What more is needed for the venal souls who are born in courts, or who are worthy to live there?

Democratic literatures always swarm with these authors who see in letters only an industry,[e] and, for the few great writers that you see there, you count sellers of ideas by the thousands.

c. In the draft: "It would be very useful to know what Corneille, Racine and Voiture gained from their works."

d. In the draft:

> Not only do the Americans make few books, but also most of their books seem written solely with profit in view. You would say that in general their authors see in literature only an industry and cultivate letters in the same spirit that they clear virgin forests. That is easily understood.
>
> [In the margin: This must probably be deleted, for the Americans cannot present the image of opposites.
>
> If in literature they are subject to the aristocratic genius of the English, as I said previously, how can they present the vices of the literary genius of democracies?
>
> That is not yet clear however.]/
>
> The fault comes in the word *literature.* The Americans do not have literature, but they have books and what I am saying about their books is true.

e. In the draft: "Authors desire money more than in aristocratic centuries because money is everything./

"They earn money more easily because of the multitude of readers./

"And the less they aim for perfection, the more of it they earn."

CHAPTER 15[a]

Why the Study of Greek and Latin Literature Is Particularly Useful in Democratic Societies

What was called the people in the most democratic republics of antiquity hardly resembled what we call the people. In Athens, all citizens took part in public affairs; but there were only twenty thousand citizens out of more than three hundred fifty thousand inhabitants; all the others were slaves and fulfilled most of the functions that today belong to the people and even to the middle classes.

So Athens, with its universal suffrage, was, after all, only an aristocratic republic in which all the nobles had an equal right to government.

a. 1. That the ancient societies always formed true aristocracies, despite their democratic appearance.

2. That their literature was always in an aristocratic state, because of the rarity of books.

3. That their authors show, in fact, very much in relief the qualities natural to those who write in times of aristocracy.

4. That it is therefore very appropriate to study them in democratic times.

5. That does not mean that everyone must be thrown into the study of Greek and Latin.

What is good for literature can be inappropriate for social and political needs.

In democratic centuries it is important to the interest of individuals and to the security of the State that studies are more industrial than literary.

But in these societies there must be schools where one can be nourished by ancient literature.

A few (illegible word) universities and literary (illegible word) would do better for that than the multitude of our bad colleges (YTC, CVf, p. 16).

You must consider the struggle of the patricians and the plebeians of Rome in the same light and see in it only an internal quarrel between the junior members and the elders of the same family. All belonged in fact to the aristocracy and had its spirit.[b]

It must be noted, moreover, that in all of antiquity books were rare and expensive, and that it was highly difficult to reproduce them and to circulate them. These circumstances, coming to concentrate in a small number of men the taste and practice of letters, formed like a small literary aristocracy of the elite within a larger political aristocracy. Also nothing indicates that, among the Greeks and the Romans, letters were ever treated like an industry.

So these peoples, who formed not only aristocracies, but who were also very civilized and very free nations, had to give to their literary productions the particular vices and special qualities that characterize literature in aristocratic centuries.

It is sufficient, in fact, to cast your eyes on the writings that antiquity has left to us to discover that, if writers there sometimes lacked variety and fertility in subjects, boldness, movement and generalization in thought, they always demonstrated an admirable art and care in details; nothing in their works seems done in haste or by chance; everything is

b. [In the margin: To put in the preface when I show the difficulty of the subject.
New state.
Incomplete state.]
It is sufficient to read the *Vies des hommes illustres* of Plutarch to be convinced that antiquity was and always remained profoundly aristocratic in its laws, in its ideas, in its mores [v: opinions], that what was understood by the people of that time does not resemble the people of today, and that the rivalry of plebeians and patricians in Rome compared to what is happening today between the rich and the poor must be considered only as internal quarrels between the elders and the junior members of an aristocracy.
[To the side: that even the democracy of Athens never resembled that of America [v: never could give the idea of the democratic republic].
This idea has been introduced in the chapters on literature and is good there] (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 37–38).

In March and April 1838, Tocqueville read Plutarch. In his letters to Beaumont, Corcelle and Royer-Collard, he admits that he finds in Plutarch a grandeur of spirit that pleases him and makes him forget the moral meanness of the time in which he lives. Various parts of the manuscript retain traces of this reading.

written for connoisseurs, and the search for ideal beauty is shown constantly. There is no literature that puts more into relief the qualities that are naturally lacking in writers of democracies than that of the ancients. So no literature exists that is more appropriate to study in democratic centuries. This study is, of all, the most appropriate for combatting the literary defects inherent in these centuries; as for their natural qualities, they will arise all by themselves without the need to learn how to acquire them.

Here I must make myself clear.

A study can be useful to the literature of a people and not be appropriate for their social and political needs.

If you persisted stubbornly in teaching only literature in a society where each man was led by habit to make violent efforts to increase his fortune or to maintain it, you would have very polished and very dangerous citizens; for since the social and political state gives them needs every day that education would never teach them to satisfy, they would disturb the State, in the name of the Greeks and the Romans, instead of making it fruitful by their industry.

It is clear that in democratic societies the interest of individuals, as well as the security of the State, requires that the education of the greatest number be scientific, commercial, and industrial rather than literary.

Greek and Latin must not be taught in all schools; but it is important that those destined by their nature or their fortune to cultivate letters, or predisposed to appreciate them, find schools where they can perfectly master ancient literature and be thoroughly penetrated by its spirit. A few excellent universities would be worth more to achieve this goal than a multitude of bad colleges where superfluous studies done badly prevent necessary studies from being done well.

All those who have the ambition to excel in letters, among democratic nations, must be nourished often by the works of antiquity. It is a healthy regimen.

It is not that I consider the literary productions of the ancients as irreproachable. I think only that they have special qualities that can serve marvelously to counterbalance our particular defects. They support us as we lean over the edge.

CHAPTER 16[a]

How American Democracy Has Modified the English Language[b]

If what I have said previously concerning letters in general has been well understood by the reader, he will easily imagine what type of influence the democratic social state and democratic institutions can exercise on language itself, which is the first instrument of thought.

a. 1. Modification that English has experienced in America.
2. Democratic cause of that:

1. Democratic peoples constantly change their words, because among them things are constantly shifting. Thus, great number of new words, character of democratic languages.

2. Character of these new words. Most of them are related to the needs of industry, to the science of administration.

3. Origin of these words. Little of learned etymologies. Some borrowings made from living languages. Above all, gain from itself.

Three means of gaining from itself: 1. Put forgotten terms back into use. 2. Make expressions belonging to a science or to a profession enter into general circulation with a figurative meaning. 3. Give to a word in use an uncommon meaning. That is the most widely used and easiest method, but also the most dangerous. By doubling the meaning of a word in this way, you make it uncertain which one you are leaving aside for it and which one you are giving to it.

4. What makes dialects and *patois* disappear with democratic institutions.

5. What makes all artificial and conventional classifications of words disappear as well in the same period.

6. Why democracy multiplies abstract words, generalizes their use and leads to the abuse of them (YTC, CVf, p. 17).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript: "The review of this chapter was extremely tiring for me; I do not know if this explains why I currently consider the chapter as too long and boring and miss the original draft, fragments of which I will find moreover in the rubish.

"Read this chapter to men of the world and study their impressions."

American authors live more, truly speaking, in England than in their own country, since they constantly study English writers and take them daily as models. It is not like this for the population itself; the latter is subjected more immediately to the particular causes that can have an effect on the United States. So you must pay attention not to the written language, but to the spoken language, if you want to see the modifications that the idiom of an aristocratic people can undergo while becoming the language of a democracy.[c]

Educated Englishmen, and judges more competent to appreciate these fine nuances than I am able to be myself,[d] have often assured me that the

c. In the margin: "≠So the language of a people is an excellent indicator for judging their social state, just as knowledge of the social state is sufficient to judge the state of the language in advance.≠"

d. They said that the Americans showed even more propensity than the English for making new words; that when the Americans made a new word, they never looked for its root in learned languages; that they borrowed it from foreign languages or even from their own language by changing the meaning of an already known word or by making a word move from the real meaning to the figurative meaning. These educated Englishmen added that most of these borrowings were made from the vocabulary of artisans, of businessmen, of political men rather than from that of philosophers, so that language had a kind of tendency to become materialized. Finally, they said that the Americans often used indiscriminately the same words in very diverse circumstances; so that the Americans employed on a solemn occasion an expression that the English would have used only in the most ordinary cases and vice versa.

Letter to Mr. Hall (on letter paper, *Rubish,* 1).

The letter to Basil Hall, from which Tocqueville drew this fragment, is found in the library of Princeton University and says this:

Château de Baugy, 19 June 1836./

I cannot thank you enough, Sir, for the letter you kindly sent me on the 4th of this month. I accept with a great deal of gratitude all that it contains of flattery and usefulness. Your opinions on America and on England will always carry a great weight in my view and I love knowing them, even when they do not exactly conform to mine. Controversy between men who esteem one another can only be very profitable. I will prove that your letter pleased me greatly by answering it at great length. I would like my response to engage you in continuing a correspondence to which I attach great value.

You reproach me for having said: *that the interests of the poor were sacrificed in England to those of the rich.* I confess that this thought, explained in so few words, thrown out in passing, without commentaries, is of a nature to present a much more

absolute meaning than the one I meant to give it, and my intention has always been to modify it, when I could get to reviewing my work. What I wanted to say principally is that England is a country in which wealth is the *required preliminary* for a host of things that elsewhere you can gain without it. So that in England there is a host of careers that are much more closed to the poor than they are in several other countries. This would still demand a great number of explanations in order to be well understood. I am obliged to set them aside for the moment when I will have the pleasure of seeing you again. For now, I move to a subject that has a more *current* interest for me, which is America.

You find that I have portrayed too favorably the *domestic happiness* of the Americans. As it is very important for me to clarify this delicate point to which I will be obliged to return in my two last volumes, you will allow me, I hope, to submit a few observations to you. I have not claimed that a great tenderness reigned in the interior of households in the United States; I wanted to say that a great deal of order and purity reigned there, an essential condition for the order and tranquillity of political society itself. I believed that came in part from the principles and the character that American women brought to the conjugal union, and it is in this sense that I said that women exercised a great indirect influence on politics. It seemed to me that in the United States more than in any other country that I know, it was acknowledged and regulated by *unanimous consent* that the woman once married devoted herself entirely to her husband and to her children, and that is what made me say that *nowhere had a higher and more just idea of conjugal happiness been imagined.* The extreme purity of morals in marriage seems to me, after all, the first of all the conditions for this happiness, although it is not the only one, and on this point America seems to me to have the advantage even over England. I proved by my conduct the high idea that I have of English women; but if virtue is, as I do not doubt, the general rule for them, this rule seems to me to allow still fewer exceptions on the other side of the Atlantic. Here is my comment on this subject: I *never* heard a thoughtless remark said in the United States about a married woman; American books always assume chaste women; foreigners themselves, whose tongues would not be bound by custom, confess that there is nothing to say about them. I have even met some of them corrupt enough to be distressed by it, and their regret seemed to me the most complete demonstration of the fact. The same unanimity is not seen in England. I met young fools in England who hardly spared the honor of their female compatriots. I saw moralists who complained that the morality of women, principally in the lower classes, was not as great as formerly. Finally, your writers themselves sometimes assume that conjugal faith is violated. All of that does not exist, to my knowledge, in America. But I see myself that I have allowed myself to be carried much too far in my demonstration. I hope that you will see in what precedes only the extreme desire to enlighten myself on a subject that is infinitely important for me to know.

I will answer almost nothing on what you tell me about the Anglican Church. I do not know England well enough to be able to discuss with you the degree of political utility that your church can have. What I want to say is that in general I believe the union of church and State, not harmful to the State, but harmful to the church. I

enlightened classes of the United States differed notably, in their language, from the enlightened classes of Great Britain.[e]

have seen too closely among us the fatal consequences of this union not to be afraid that something analogous is happening among you. Now, that is a result that you must try to avoid at all cost, for religion is, in my eyes, the first of all the political guarantees, and I do not see any good that can compensate men for the loss of beliefs.

I thank you very much for taking the trouble to inform me about the idiom of the Americans. This subject has interested me greatly recently, and I want to talk about it with you at greater length since you have assured me that my questions would not bother you.

In the United States I met very well bred Englishmen who made the following remarks to me. They struck me all the more at the moment when they were made to me because I had observed something analogous in the modifications that the French language has undergone during the past one hundred years. They said then that the Americans had still more propensity than the English for making new words, that when they made a new word they never looked for its root in learned languages, that they borrowed it from foreign languages or even from their own language by changing the meaning of an already known word or by making a word move from the real meaning to the figurative meaning. They added that most of these borrowings were made from the language of various industries, that they were taken from the vocabulary of artisans, of businessmen, of political men rather than from that of philosophers, so that the language had a tendency to become materialized, in a way. I do not know, Sir, if I am making myself understood. A long conversation would be necessary to explain what I am forced to put into a few lines. Also I am counting more on your sagacity than on my clarity. These same persons also said that it often happened that the Americans used indiscriminately the same words in very diverse circumstances, so that they employed on a solemn occasion an expression that the English would have used only in the most ordinary cases and vice versa.

Does all of that seem well founded to you? If this scribbling suggests some ideas to you and you would be good enough to share them with me, I will be very obliged to you. And now, Sir, it only remains for me to ask you to excuse my detestable writing—that you will perhaps decipher with difficulty—and to accept the assurance of my most profound consideration.

[signed: Alexis de Tocqueville.]

P. S. If your article appears in the review, I will be very pleased to see it, but believe, Sir, that this circumstance will add nothing to the gratitude that I feel at your having written it.

With the kind permission of Princeton University (General Manuscripts [Misc.] Collection, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, University Library). The article of Basil Hall cited in the postscript is "Tocqueville on the State of America," *Quarterly Review,* 57, 1836, pp. 132–62.

e. In the margin: "≠Canada.≠"

They not only complained that the Americans had put many new words into use; the difference or the distance between the two countries was enough to explain that; but they also complained that these new words were particularly borrowed either from the jargon of parties, or from the mechanical arts, or from the language of business. They added that old English words were often taken by the Americans in a new sense. Finally, they said that the inhabitants of the United States frequently intermingled styles in a singular way, and that they sometimes put together words that, in the language of the mother country, were customarily kept apart. [This is how they happened, for example, to introduce a familiar or common expression into the pomp of a speech.]

These remarks, which were made to me at various times by men who seemed to me to merit belief, led me to reflect upon this subject, and my reflections brought me, by theory, to the same place that they had reached by practice.

In aristocracies, where everything remains at rest, language must naturally share that rest. Few new words are made, because few new things happen; and if you did new things, you would try hard to portray them with known words whose meaning has been fixed by tradition.

If it happens that the human mind there finally stirs by itself, or that enlightenment, penetrating from outside, awakens it, the new expressions that are created have a learned, intellectual and philosophical character that indicates that they do not to owe their birth to a democracy. When the fall of Constantinople made the sciences and letters flow back toward the West [and when the enlightenment of antiquity after being revived in Italy finally penetrated among us], the French language found itself almost all at once invaded by a multitude of new words, all of which had their roots in Greek and Latin. You then saw in France an erudite neologism, which was practiced only by the enlightened classes, and whose effects were never felt by the people or only reached them in the long run.

All the nations of Europe successively presented the same spectacle. Milton alone introduced into the English language more than six hundred words, almost all drawn from Latin, Greek and Hebrew.[f]

f. M. de Chateaubriand says in his comments on Milton, I, V, that the latter created

The perpetual movement that reigns within a democracy tends on the contrary constantly to renew the face of language like that of public affairs. Amid this general agitation and this competition of all minds, a great number of new ideas are formed; old ideas are lost or reappear; or they become subdivided into infinite small nuances.

So words are often found there that must go out of use, and others that must be brought into use.

Democratic nations moreover love movement for itself. That is seen in language as well as in politics. Even when they do not need to change words, they sometimes feel the desire to do so.

The genius of democratic peoples shows itself not only in the great number of new words that they put into use, but also in the nature of the ideas that these new words represent.

Among these peoples, the majority makes the law in the matter of language, as in everything else. Its spirit reveals itself there as elsewhere. Now,

five to six hundred new words, nearly all drawn from Greek, Hebrew and Latin. Good example of learned neologism./

Consubstantiality, word created or at least recognized and brought to light by the Council of Nice [Nicea (ed.)] in the fourth century to combat Arius.

Transubstantiation, word created in the XVIth century by the adversaries of Luther who wanted to express by [that (ed.)] that the bread of the host changed substance and became the body of Jesus Christ. See *Histoire des variations,* v. 1, p. 113.

Constitutionality, word created by the French Revolution expressing likewise a new idea. Examples of new words that different causes can invent in all times (*Rubish,* 1).

In the margin of the manuscript, Tocqueville notes another example of neologism: "comfortable—English."

Cf. Chateaubriand, *Essai sur la littérature anglaise* (Paris: Charles Gosselin and Furne, 1836), I, pp. 8–9. Tocqueville authorized Henry Reeve, the English translator of his book, to delete the reference to Milton, which the latter considered inaccurate. Reeve finally left it, probably because Tocqueville had informed him that it was already too late to eliminate it from the French edition (*Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, pp. 54–57).

During the summer of 1836, which he spent in Switzerland, Tocqueville read *The Prince,* the *History of Florence* and some letters of Machiavelli, the *Complete Works* of Plato and the *Histoire des variations* of Bossuet (the library of the Tocqueville château contains an edition published in Paris in 1730).

the majority is occupied more with public affairs than studies, more with political and commercial interests than with philosophical speculation or literature. Most of the words created or accepted by the majority will bear the mark of these habits; they will serve principally to express the needs of industry, the passions of parties or the details of public administration. Language will expand constantly in that way, while on the contrary it will little by little abandon the terrain of metaphysics and theology.

As for the source from which democratic nations draw their new words and the manner in which they set about to fabricate them, it is easy to say.

Men who live in democratic countries hardly know the language that was spoken in Rome and in Athens, and they do not bother about going back to antiquity in order to find the expression they are lacking. If they sometimes resort to learned etymologies, it is ordinarily vanity that makes them search the content of the dead languages, and not erudition that brings certain words naturally to their minds. It even happens sometimes that it is the most ignorant among them who make the most use of such etymologies. The entirely democratic desire to go beyond your sphere often leads men in democracies to want to enhance a very coarse profession by a Greek or Latin name. The lower an occupation and the more removed from knowledge, the more pompous and erudite is the name. This is how our tightrope walkers have transformed themselves into acrobats and funambulists.

Lacking dead languages, democratic peoples willingly borrow words from living languages; for they communicate constantly among themselves, and the men of different countries willingly imitate each other, because they resemble each other more each day.

But democratic peoples look principally to their own language for the means to innovate. From time to time, they take up in their vocabulary forgotten expressions that they bring to light again, or they take from a particular class of citizens a term that is its own in order to bring the term into the regular language with a figurative meaning; a multitude of expressions that at first belonged only to the special language of a party or a profession thus find themselves brought into general circulation.

The most usual expedient that democratic peoples employ to innovate

with regard to language consists of giving an uncommon meaning to an expression already in use. This method is very simple, very quick and very easy. Knowledge is not needed to use it well; and ignorance even facilitates its use. But it makes language run great risks. By doubling the meaning of a word in this way, democratic peoples sometimes make it doubtful which meaning they are leaving aside and which one they are giving to it.

An author begins by turning a known expression a little bit away from its original meaning and after having modified it in this way, he adapts it as well as he can to his subject. Another appears who pulls the meaning in another direction; a third carries it with him along a new path; and since there is no common arbiter, no permanent tribunal that can definitely settle the meaning of the word, the latter remains in a variable situation. As a result, writers almost never have an air of being attached to a single thought; instead they always seem to aim at the middle of a group of ideas, leaving to the reader the trouble of judging which one is hit.

This is an unfortunate consequence of democracy. I would prefer that you sprinkled the language with Chinese, Tartar or Huron words, than to make the meaning of French words uncertain. Harmony and homogeneity are only the secondary beauties of language. There is much more convention in this kind of thing, and you can, if necessary, do without them. But there is no good language without clear terms.[g]

Equality necessarily brings several other changes to language.

In aristocratic centuries, when each nation tends to hold itself apart from all the others and loves to have a physiognomy that is its own, it often happens that several peoples who have a common origin become very foreign to each other, so that, without ceasing to be able to understand each other, they no longer all speak in the same way.

In these same centuries, each nation is divided into a certain number of classes that see each other little and do not mingle; each one of these classes invariably takes on and keeps intellectual habits that belong only to it, and adopts by preference certain words and certain terms that pass afterward

g. In the margin, concerning this paragraph: "<To delete, I think.>"

from generation to generation like inheritances. You then find in the same idiom a language of the poor and a language of the rich, a language of commoners and a language of nobles, a learned language and a vulgar language. The more profound the divisions and the more insurmountable the barriers, the more this must be so. I would readily bet that, among the castes of India, language varies prodigiously, and that almost as much difference is found between the language of a pariah and that of a Brahmin as between their forms of dress.

When, on the contrary, men no longer held in their place see each other and communicate constantly, when castes are destroyed, and when classes are renewed and mixed together, all the words of a language are mingled. Those words that cannot suit the greatest number perish; the rest form a common mass from which each person draws more or less haphazardly. Nearly all the different dialects that divided the idioms of Europe are noticeably tending to disappear; there are no *patois* in the New World, and they are disappearing daily in the Old World.[h]

This revolution in the social state influences style as well as language.

Not only does everyone use the same words, but they also get accustomed to employing each of them indiscriminately. The rules that style had created are almost destroyed. You hardly find expressions that, by their nature, seem vulgar, and others that appear refined. Since individuals from various ranks bring with them, to whatever station they rise, expressions and terms that they have used, the origin of words is lost like that of men, and a confusion is developed in language as in society.

I know that in the classification of words rules are found that are not due to one form of society rather than to another, but that derive from the

h. In America there is no class which speaks the language in a very delicate and very studied manner, but you do not find a *patois.* The same remark applies to Canada. That is due to several causes, but among others to equality of conditions which, by giving to all men an analogous education, by mixing them together constantly, has had to provide them necessarily with similar forms of language.

We see the same revolution taking place in Europe and above all in France. The *patois* are disappearing as conditions become equal (*Rubish,* 1).

very nature of things. There are expressions and turns which are vulgar because the sentiments that they must express are truly low, and others which are elevated because the objects that they want to portray are naturally very high.

Ranks, by mingling, will never make these differences disappear. But equality cannot fail to destroy what is purely conventional and arbitrary in the forms of thought. I do not even know if the necessary classification which I pointed out above will not always be less respected among a democratic people than among another; because, among such a people, there are no men whose education, enlightenment and leisure permanently dispose them to study the natural laws of language and who make those laws respected by observing them themselves.

I do not want to abandon this subject without portraying democratic languages with a last feature that will perhaps characterize them more than all the others.

I showed previously that democratic peoples had the taste and often the passion for general ideas; that is due to qualities and defects that are their own. This love of general ideas shows itself, in democratic languages, in the continual use of generic terms and abstract words, and by the manner in which they are used. That is the great merit and the great weakness of these languages.[j]

Democratic peoples passionately love generic terms and abstract words, because these expressions enlarge thought and, by allowing many objects to be included in a little space, aid the work of the mind.[k]

j. In the margin: "<Perhaps make this into a small chapter having this title: why equality multiplies the number of abstract words, generalizes their use and leads to the abuse of them.

"Probably do so.>"

k. General and abstract terms./

Due to the need to give yourself latitude while speaking either to yourself or to others; to the fear of responsibility; to the need to give yourself latitude to the right and to the left of the point where you are placed. Result of life in a changing, uncertain, agitated time, as a democratic time always is, and of the softness of souls in that same time./

All our impressions turn vague when you approach a moral question; they float

A democratic writer will willingly say in an abstract way *the capable* for capable men, and without getting into details about the things to which this capacity applies. He will speak about *actualities* in order to depict all at once the things that are happening at this moment before his eyes, and he will understand by the word *eventualities* all that can happen in the universe beginning from the moment when he is speaking.

Democratic writers constantly create abstract words of this type, or they take the abstract words of language in a more and more abstract sense.

Even more, to make discourse more rapid, they personify the object of the abstract words and make it act like a real individual. They will say that *the force of things wants the capable to govern.*[m]

I cannot do better than to explain my thought by my own example.

I have often used the word equality in an absolute sense; I have, as well, personified equality in several places, and in this way I have happened to say that equality did certain things or refrained from certain others. You can maintain that the men of the century of Louis XIV would not have spoken in this way; it would never have occurred to the mind of any one of them to use the word equality without applying it to a particular thing, and they would rather have renounced using it than agree to making equality into a living person.

These abstract words that fill democratic languages and that you use

between praise and blame. Which comes from the softness of souls that demands little effort from others and requires little from yourself (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 23).

Madame de Staël already complained about the uncontrolled creation of abstract words in Chapter VII of the second part of her *De la littérature* (Paris: Charpentier, 1842), p. 501. La Harpe had done the same.

m. "At the time of the last insurrection of the Greeks against the Turks, a minister [v: orator], having to speak of Greece and not knowing if he had to designate it as a province in revolt or as a free State, took it into his head to call it a locality. An aristocratic language would never have provided such an expedient to politics" (*Rubish,* 1). See René Georgin, "Tocqueville et le langage de la démocratie," *Vie et langage* 17, no. 201 (1968): 740–44; and Laurence Guellec, *Tocqueville et les langages de la démocratie* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004).

for the slightest reason without connecting them to any particular fact, enlarge and veil thought. They make the expression more rapid and the idea less clear. But, as regards language, democratic peoples prefer obscurity to labor.

I do not know, moreover, if vagueness does not have a certain secret charm for those who speak and write among these peoples.

Men who live there, since they are often left to the individual efforts of their intellect, are almost always tormented by doubt. Moreover, since their situation changes constantly, they are never held firmly to any one of their opinions by the very immobility of their fortune.

So the men who inhabit democratic countries often have vacillating thoughts; they must have very broad expressions in order to contain them. Since they never know if the idea they express today will suit the new situation that they will have tomorrow, they naturally conceive the taste for abstract terms. An abstract word is like a box with a false bottom; you put the ideas that you want into it, and you take them out without anyone seeing.

[I am so persuaded of the influence that the social state and political institutions of a people exercise on its language, that I think that you could easily succeed in discovering these first facts solely by inspecting the words of the language, and I am astonished that this idea has not been applied more often and more perfectly to the idioms that we know without knowing the men who use or have used them.]

Among all peoples, generic and abstract words form the basis of language; so I am not claiming that you find these words only in democratic languages. I am only saying that the tendency of men, in times of equality, is particularly to augment the number of words of this type, always to take them singly in their most abstract sense, and to use them for the slightest reason, even when the needs of speech do not require it.

CHAPTER 17[a]

a. 1. Definition of poetry. Search for and portrayal of the ideal. Object of the chapter. Try to find out if among the actions, sentiments and ideas of democratic peoples, some are found that lend themselves to the ideal and can serve as source of poetry.

2. Democratic peoples have naturally less taste for the ideal because of the passions that bind them constantly to the pursuit of the real.

3. Moreover there are several subjects proper to the portrayal of the ideal that they are lacking.

1. Religions are shaken.

2. They become simplified

3. Men take no further interest in the past.

4. They find with difficulty material for the ideal in the present because they are all small and see each other very clearly.

4. So most of the American [ancient? (ed.)] sources of poetry are drying up, but others are opening.

1. Men of democratic centuries readily take an interest in the future.

2. If individuals are small, society seems [blank (ed.)] to them and lends itself to poetry. Each nation sees itself.

3. The human species is seen and it can be portrayed.

4. There is no complete divinity, but the figure of God is greater and clearer and his place relative to the whole of human affairs is more recognizable.

5. The external man does not lend himself [to poetry (ed.)] but poets descend into the realm of the soul and there they find the sentiments of not just one man in particular, but of man in general to portray; equality brings forth the image of man in general and is interested in him.

Thus democracy does not make all the subjects that lend themselves to the ideal disappear. It makes them less numerous and greater (YTC, CVf, pp. 18–19).

In the RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS you find this as well:

Poetry of democracy./

Future of democracy, sole poetic idea of our time. Immense, indefinite idea. Period of renewal, of total change in the social system of humanity. This idea alone throws more poetry into souls than there was in the century of Louis XV and in that of Louis XIV.

It is only the past or the future that is poetic. The present very rarely is. There was nevertheless a great deal of poetry in the present in the Middle Ages. Facts to explain (*Rubish,* 1).

Of Some Sources of Poetry among Democratic Nations[b]

b. On a jacket that accompanies that of the chapter:

Piece that began the chapter and that must be deleted, I believe, as written in an affected style and above all verbiage./

I would like to portray the influence that democratic institutions exercise in the United States on the poetic genius of man, but beyond the fact that the subject is placed outside of the ordinary circle of my thoughts, a first difficulty stops me.

I do not know if anyone up to now has taken care to provide an uncontested definition of the thing I am attempting to speak about. No one can deny that poetry ≠has not≠ obtained great power over the imagination of men; but who has ever said clearly what poetry was; how many different and often dissimilar things we have gathered under this very name!

[In the margin: Show in a more striking way what is *useful* in poetry. The Romans./

It is not sufficiently understood that men cannot do without poetry./

Poetry and *poetic faculty* to distinguish. Taste for the ideal./

I want to examine not only if democracy leads men to do works of poetry but also if it suggests poetic ideas to them./

The one is not the necessary consequence of the other, for a people can have a great number of poetic ideas and not have the time or the art of writing or the taste for reading. But in general you can say that these two things go together.]

A small rhymed epigram is a work of poetry; a long epic in verse is as well. I see enormous differences between these two productions of the human mind, but they have something similar in the form. I understand that it is to form that the word begins to be attached, and I conclude from it that poetry consists of carefully enclosing the idea in a certain number of syllables symmetrically arranged. But no. I hear that these verses are poetic and that those are not. Some grant that there is poetry in a prose work and others contend that they find no trace of it in a long poem. So poetry rests not only in the form of the thought, but also in the thought itself. It can reside in the two things united or inhabit each one of them separately. So what definitively is poetry? This could become the topic for a dissertation, with which I do not intend to fatigue the reader. So instead of trying to find out what language has wanted to include in the word poetry, I will say what I include in it myself and I will fix the meaning that I give to it in the present chapter.

On a page bearing the title OF POETRY IN AMERICA, you read this first beginning of the chapter: "I often wondered while traveling across the United States if, amid this people exclusively preoccupied by the material cares of life [v: commercial enterprises], among so many mercantile speculations, a single poetic idea would be found, and I believed I recognized several of them that appeared to me eminently to have this character."

Several very different meanings have been given to the word poetry. It would tire readers to try to find out which one of these different meanings is most suitable to choose; I prefer to tell them immediately which one I have chosen.

Poetry, in my view, is the search for and the portrayal of the ideal.[c]

The poet is the one who, by taking away a part of what exists, adding some imaginary features to the picture, and combining certain real circumstances that are not found together, completes, enlarges nature. Thus, the aim of poetry will not be to represent truth, but to embellish it and to offer a higher image to the mind.[d]

Verse will seem to me like the ideal of beauty for language, and in this sense it will be eminently poetic; but in itself alone, it will not constitute poetry.

[<Poetry always takes as the subject of its portraits beings who are really found in nature or who at least live in the imagination of the men to whom it is addressed. It changes, enlarges, embellishes what exists; it does not create what does not exist, and if it attempts to do so, it can still amuse or surprise, but it no longer rouses and becomes the puerile game of an idle imagination.>][e]

I want to find out if, among the actions, sentiments and ideas of democratic peoples, some are found that lend themselves to the imagination of the ideal and that must, for this reason, be considered as natural sources of poetry.

It must first be recognized that the taste for the ideal and the pleasure that is taken in seeing its portrayal are never as intense and as widespread among a democratic people as within an aristocracy.

[In democratic societies the human mind finds itself constantly bound

c. "The greatest proof of the misery of man is poetry. God cannot make poetry; he sees everything clearly" (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* I).

d. "You idealize a small object, you are poetic without being great.

"You represent a great thing in its natural state, you are great or sublime, but not poetic" (*Rubish,* I).

e. "I will go still further and without limiting the name of poet to writers I will readily agree to extend it to all those who undertake to offer images to men, provided that they represent by them something superior to what is. Raphael will seem to me to merit this title as well as Homer" (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* I).

by the small details of real [v: present] life. That results not only from the fact that all men work, but above all from the fact that they carry out all their works with fervor and I could almost say with love.][f]

Among aristocratic nations, it sometimes happens that the body acts as if by itself, while the soul is plunged into a repose that weighs it down. Among these nations, the people themselves often show poetic tastes, and their spirit sometimes soars above and beyond what surrounds them.[g]

But, in democracies, the love of natural enjoyments, the idea of something better, competition, the charm of impending success, are like so many spurs that quicken the steps of each man in the career that he has embraced and forbid him from standing aside from it for a single moment. The principal effort of the soul goes in this direction. Imagination is not extinguished, but it devotes itself almost exclusively to imagining the useful and to representing the real.

Equality not only diverts men from portraying the ideal; it decreases the number of subjects to portray.

[You cannot deny that equality [v: democracy], while becoming established among men, does not make a great number of these subjects that lent themselves to the portrayal of the ideal disappear from their view, and does not in this way dry up several of the most abundant sources of poetry.]

Aristocracy, by holding society immobile, favors the steadiness and duration of positive religions, as well as the stability of political institutions.

Not only does it maintain the human spirit in faith, but it disposes it to adopt one faith rather than another. An aristocratic people will always be inclined to place intermediary powers between God and man.

You can say that in this aristocracy shows itself very favorable to poetry. When the universe is populated with supernatural powers that do not fall within the senses, but are discovered by the mind, imagination feels at ease,

f. In the margin: "<This sentence is found word for word, I believe, in *revolutions.* Vary it in one place or the other. The idea is necessary to both.>"

g. In the margin: "<While the middle classes, although they have more leisure, show it almost not at all. From that you can see clearly that it is less the constraint of work that stops the poetic impulse than the spirit that is brought to work.>"

and poets, finding a thousand diverse subjects to portray, find innumerable spectators ready to be interested in their portraits.

In democratic centuries, on the contrary, it sometimes happens that beliefs go drifting away like the laws. Doubt then brings the imagination of poets back to earth and encloses them within the visible and real world.[h]

Even when equality does not shake religions, it simplifies them; it diverts attention from secondary agents in order to bring it principally to the sovereign master.

Aristocracy naturally leads the human mind to the contemplation of the past, and fixes it there. Democracy, on the contrary, gives men a sort of instinctive distaste for what is ancient. In that, aristocracy is very much more favorable to poetry, for things ordinarily enlarge and become obscure as they become more distant; and from this double perspective they lend themselves more to the portrayal of the ideal.

After removing the past from poetry, equality partially removes the present.

Among aristocratic peoples, a certain number of privileged individuals exist, whose existence is so to speak above and beyond the human condition; power, wealth, glory, spirit, delicacy and distinction in all things seem to belong by right to the latter. The crowd never sees them very closely, or does not follow them in detail; there is little that you have to do to make the portrayal of these men poetic.

On the other hand, there exists among these same peoples ignorant, humble and subservient classes; and the latter lend themselves to poetry by the very excess of their coarseness and misery, as the others do by their refinement and their grandeur. Moreover, since the different classes that make up an aristocratic people are very separated from each other and know each other badly, imagination can always, while representing them, add something to or subtract something from the real.

In democratic societies, where men are all very small and very similar,

h. "Doubt itself *prosaic* in detail is immensely poetic over all. Byron proved it very well. What poetry in the *why* and the *how* of man in face of God and of nature.

"*Audacious* doubt is eminently democratic" (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* 1).

each one, while viewing himself, sees all the others at the same instant. So poets who live in democratic centuries cannot ever take one man in particular as the subject of their portrait; for a subject with mediocre greatness, which you also see clearly on all sides, will never lend itself to the ideal.

Therefore equality, while becoming established on the earth, dries up most of the ancient sources of poetry.

Let us try to show how it finds new ones.

When doubt depopulated heaven and when the progress of equality reduced each man to better known and smaller proportions, poets, not yet imagining what they could put in place of these great subjects that withdrew with aristocracy, turned their eyes toward inanimate nature. Losing heroes and gods from view, they undertook at first to portray rivers and mountains.

That gave birth in the last century to the poetry that was called, par excellence, descriptive.

Some have thought that this embellished portrayal of the material and inanimate things which cover the earth was poetry appropriate to democratic centuries; but I think that is a mistake. I believe that it only represents a period of transition.

I am persuaded that in the long run democracy diverts the imagination from everything that is external to man, in order to fix it only on man.[j]

Democratic peoples can be very amused for a moment by considering nature; but they get really excited only by the sight of themselves. Here alone are the natural sources of poetry to be found among these peoples, and it may be believed that all poets who do not want to draw upon these sources will lose all sway over the souls of those whom they claim to charm, and will end by no longer having anything except cold witnesses to their transports.

j. "Democracy diverts the human mind from the contemplation of external objects in order to concentrate it on itself. 'Man is the most beautiful study of man', Pope said. That is true for all peoples, but there is no more evident truth for a democratic people. Almost the whole of its literature is contained in this single expression" (*Rubish,* 1).

I have demonstrated how the idea of the progress and of the indefinite perfectibility of the human species was appropriate to democratic ages.

Democratic peoples hardly worry about what has been, but they readily dream about what will be, and their imagination has no limits in this direction; it expands and grows without measure.

This offers a vast opening to poets and allows them to move their portrayal far away from what is seen. Democracy, which closes the past to poetry, opens the future.

[≠In democratic centuries poets cannot take as the subject of their portrait a hero or a prince.≠]

Since all the citizens who make up a democratic society are nearly equal and similar, poetry cannot attach itself to any one of them; but the nation offers itself to its brush. The similarity of all individuals, which makes each one of them separately inappropriate for becoming the subject of poetry, allows poets to include them all in the same image and to consider finally the people itself. Democratic nations see their own figure more clearly than all others and this great figure lends itself marvelously to the portrayal of the ideal.

I will easily acknowledge that the Americans[k] do not have poets; I cannot admit as well that they do not have poetic ideas.[m]

Some in Europe are very much interested in the American wilderness, but the Americans themselves hardly think about it. The wonders of inanimate nature leave them indifferent, and so to speak they see the admirable forests that surround them only at the moment when they fall under their blows.[n] Their sight is filled with another spectacle. The American

k. "I cited this example of America not only because America is the particular object of my discourse, but also because I believe that in this it provides me with insights about what must happen among democratic peoples in general" (*Rubish,* 1).

m. Milton, democratic poet./

"Byron *idem.*/

"The one is democratic because he drew his generative idea from Christianity.

"The other by the natural impulse of his time" (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* 1).

n. "There is until now only a single writer who has felt and could produce this admirable poetry of wild nature such as the wilderness of America reveals to us, and this great poet is not American" (*Rubish,* 1).

people see themselves marching across this wilderness, draining swamps, straightening rivers, populating empty areas, and subduing nature. [Every day they notice their size growing and their strength increasing, and they already perceive themselves in the future leading as absolute masters the vast continent that they have made fruitful and cleared.] This magnificent image of themselves does not only present itself now and then to the imagination of the Americans; you can say that it follows each one of them in the least as well as in the principal of his actions, and that it remains always hovering in his mind.

You cannot imagine anything so small, so colorless, so full of miserable interests, so anti-poetical, in a word, than the life of a man in the United States; but among the thoughts that direct him one is always found that is full of poetry, and that one is like a hidden nerve which gives vigor to all the rest.[o] [You must not be astonished by this for how could you think that men who do such great things would be entirely devoid of great ideas?][p]

In aristocratic centuries, each people, like each individual, is inclined to hold itself immobile and separate from all the others.

In democratic centuries the extreme mobility of men and their impatient desires make them constantly change place, and make the inhabitants of different countries mingle together, see and hear each other, and borrow from each other. So it is not only the members of the same nation who become similar; nations themselves assimilate, and all together form in the eye of the beholder nothing more than a vast democracy in which each

o. "So I do not fear that democratic peoples lack poetry, but I am afraid that this poetry aims for the gigantesque rather than for grandeur. For it, I fear the influence of their poets more than their timidity, and I am afraid that the sublime there may be several times closer still to the ridiculous than anywhere else" (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* 1).

p. In a first draft, this paragraph followed: "≠The sight of what is happening in the United States makes me reflect on democratic peoples in general, and these new reflections modify the opinion that I had had formerly that democracies could not fail to extinguish the poetic genius of man and to substitute for the empire of the imagination that of good sense. That is true, but to a lesser degree than I had believed at first. So I think that there is a kind of poetry within reach of democratic peoples, and I am persuaded that great writers who will be born among them will not fail to see it and to take hold of it≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

citizen is a people. That brings to light for the first time the figure of the human species.

All that relates to the existence of the human species taken as a whole, its vicissitudes, its future becomes a very fertile mine for poetry.[q]

Poets who lived in aristocratic ages made admirable portraits by taking as subjects certain incidents in the life of a people or of a man; but not one of them ever dared to include in his tableau the destinies of the human species, while poets who write in democratic ages can undertake to do so.

At the same time that each person, raising his eyes above his country, finally begins to notice humanity itself, God reveals himself more and more to the human mind in his full and entire majesty.

If in democratic centuries faith in positive religions is often shaky and beliefs in intermediary powers, whatever name you give them, grow dim, men on the other hand are disposed to conceive a much more vast idea of Divinity itself, and the intervention of the divine in human affairs appears to them in a new and greater light.

Seeing the human species as a single whole, they easily imagine that the same design rules over its destinies, and in the actions of each individual, they are led to recognize the mark of this general and constant plan by which God leads the species.[r]

This can also be considered as a very abundant source of poetry that opens in these centuries.

Democratic poets will always seem small and cold if they try to give bodily forms to gods, demons or angels, and try to make them descend from heaven to quarrel over the earth.

But, if democratic poets want to connect the great events that they are relating to the general designs of God for the universe, and, without show-

q. Note on the other side of the jacket that contains the *rubish* of the chapter: "In aristocracy, the detail of man poetic. Homer portrays Achilles. In democracy, humanity independently of the particular forms that it can take in certain places and in certain times. Byron, *Childe Harold,* Chateaubriand, *René"* (*Rubish,* 1).

r. "What is more poetic than the *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* of Bossuet? Only God and the human species are present there, however" (*Rubish,* 1).

ing the hand of the sovereign master, cause his thought to be entered into, they will be admired and understood, for the imagination of their compatriots itself follows this road.[s]

You can equally foresee that poets who live in democratic ages will portray passions and ideas rather than persons and actions. [and that they will apply themselves to relating the general features of human passions and ideas rather than those that depend on a time and on a country.[t]

This is easy to understand.]

Language, dress and the daily actions of men in democracies are resistant to the imagination of the ideal. These things are not poetic in themselves, and they would moreover cease to be so, because they are too well known by all those to whom you undertook to speak about them. That forces poets constantly to penetrate below the external surface that the senses reveal to them, in order to glimpse the soul itself. Now there is nothing that lends

s. We have had today (22 April 1837) an interesting conversation on poetry.

We all fell into agreement that the intervention of the divinity in human affairs was essentially poetic by nature and particularly necessary to epic poetry.

The discussion turned on the means of making the intervention of the divinity felt today, of making it perceptible.

By common agreement we abandoned mythological divinities, personified passions . . . , as operatic machines that chilled the spectator.

I maintained that today you had equally to avoid using saints, demons and angels, since the spirit of the century was drawn more and more to grasp the idea of the entirely intellectual and non-material action of the divinity on souls, without intermediaries in whom you scarcely believe. But the difficulty arose of making this action, conceived by the mind alone, felt and making this invisible agent seen in the very play of human passions.

Charles [Stoffels? (ed.)] maintained that man was so made that you could never make him conceive of the intervention of the divinity without visible agents. I maintained the opposite, but without being able to develop my thought practically.

[In the margin: Humanitarian poetry.

Poem of man. Human destiny.

Jocelyn. Human condition.

This merits being carefully examined (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* 1).

t. "Sensual poetry. Arabs.

Appropriate to democratic peoples" (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* 1).

itself more to portraying the ideal than man envisaged in this way in the depths of his non-material nature.[u]

I do not need to travel across heaven and earth to find a marvelous subject full of contrast, of grandeur and infinite pettiness, of profound obscurities and singular clarity, capable at the same time of giving birth to pity, admiration, contempt, terror. I have only to consider myself. Man comes out of nothing, passes through time, and goes to disappear forever into the bosom of God. You see him only for a moment wandering at the edge of the two abysses where he gets lost.

If man were completely unaware of himself, he would not be poetic; for what you have no idea about you cannot portray. If he saw himself clearly, his imagination would remain dormant and would have nothing to add to the picture. But man is revealed enough for him to see something of himself, and hidden enough for the rest to disappear into impenetrable shadows, into which he plunges constantly and always in vain, in order finally to understand himself.[v]

u. In the manuscript, you find in place of this sentence two paragraphs that repeat ideas present in other places of the chapter.

v. Miseries of man./

[In the margin: To put perhaps with sentiments. Transition.

Put somewhere because *good.*

Human will.

In preface probably when I say that I am speaking about the difficulty of the subject.]

If you examine the conduct of men, you easily discover that tastes direct them much more than opinions or ideas.

Where does the instinctive, almost physical sensation that we call taste come from? How is it born, is it supported? Where does it take us and push us? Who knows?

Thus man does not know even the principal motive of his own actions and when, tired of looking for truth in the entire universe, he comes back toward himself, obscurity seems to redouble as he approaches and wants to understand himself.

[In the margin: This text is better.

And when, tired of looking for what makes his fellows act, he tries hard at least to untangle what pushes himself, he still does not know what to believe. He travels across the entire universe and he doubts. He finally comes back toward himself and obscurity seems to redouble as he approaches himself more and wants to understand himself.]

9 March 1836 (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 12–13).

So among democratic peoples, you must not wait for poetry to live by legends, for it to be nourished by traditions and ancient memories, for it to try to repopulate the universe with supernatural beings in whom readers and poets themselves no longer believe, or for it coldly to personify virtues and vices that you can see in their own form. It lacks all these resources; but man remains for it, and that is enough. Human destinies, man, taken apart from his time and country and placed in front of nature and God, with his passions, his doubts, his unprecedented prosperity and incomprehensible miseries, will become for these peoples the principal and almost unique subject of poetry; and this is what you can already ascertain if you consider what has been written by the great writers who have appeared since the world began to turn toward democracy.

Writers who, today, have so admirably reproduced the features of Childe Harold, of René and of Jocelyn[w] did not claim to recount the actions of one man; they wanted to illuminate and enlarge certain still obscure aspects of the human heart.

Tocqueville here is referring to Pascal, very specifically to the fragment on the disproportion of man (*pensée* 390 of the Lafuma edition).

In 1831, he had already written to Ernest de Chabrol a letter with accents of Pascal:

> The more I examine this country and everything, the more I see and the more I am frightened by seeing the few certainties that man is able to acquire in this world. There is no subject that does not grow larger as you pursue it, no fact or observation at the bottom of which you do not find a doubt. All the objects of this life appear to us only like certain decorations of the opera that you see only through a curtain that prevents you from discerning the contours with precision.
>
> There are men who enjoy living in this perpetual half-light; as for me, it tires me out and drives me to despair. I would like to hold political and moral truths as I hold my pen, and doubt besieges me.
>
> Yesterday there was an American who asked me how I classified human miseries; I answered without hesitating that I put them in this order: chronic illnesses, death, doubt. . . . He stopped me and protested; I have reflected about it since and I persist in my classification, but this is enough philosophy (letter of 19 November 1832, YTC, BIa2).

w. Henry Reeve added *Faust* to these examples.

Those are the poems of democracy.

So equality does not destroy all the subjects of poetry; it makes them less numerous and more vast.[x]

x. I do not know if poetry such as I have taken care to define it, poetry that does not consist of a particular form but [of (ed.)] a certain kind of ideas, is not among the literary tastes most natural to democracy <because it is enjoyed without preparation and in a moment and it rapidly removes the soul from the middle of the pettiness and monotony of democratic life.

The great images of poetry seize so to [speak (ed.)] the soul without warning; they draw it as if by force far away from its everyday habits.> The enjoyments that poetry provides are more instinctive than reasoned; you enjoy them without preparation, you obtain them for yourself instantaneously. They seize so to speak the soul without warning and draw it as if by force far away from its everyday routine.

What fits democracy better than all that? (RUBISH OF THESE CHAPTERS, *Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 18[a]

Why American Writers and Orators Are Often Bombastic[b]

I have often noticed that the Americans, who generally treat matters with a clear and spare language devoid of all ornamentation, and whose extreme simplicity is often common, fall readily into bombast as soon as they want to take up poetic style. They then appear pompous without letup from one end of the speech to the other; and seeing them lavish images at every turn in this way, you would think that they never said anything simply.

The English fall more rarely into a similar fault.

The cause of this can be pointed out without much difficulty.

In democratic societies, each citizen is habitually busy contemplating a very small object, which is himself. If he comes to raise his eyes higher, he then sees only the immense image of society, or the still greater figure of the human species. He has only very particular and very clear ideas, or very general and very vague notions; the intermediate space is empty.

a. 1. Men who live in democracies have only very small ideas that relate to themselves or very general ones. As soon as you take them out of themselves, they want the gigantesque.

2. Their writers give it to them readily because they have similar instincts and as well because they have the democratic taste of succeeding quickly and with little cost.

3. Among democratic peoples poetic sources are beautiful, but rare. They are soon exhausted. And then you throw yourself into the monstrous and the imaginary (YTC, CVf, p. 19).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript: "Perhaps this chapter is too thin to be put separately and should be joined to the preceding one."

So when you have drawn him out of himself, he is always waiting for you to offer him some prodigious object to look at, and it is only at this price that he agrees to keep himself away for a moment from the small complicated concerns that agitate and charm his life.

This seems to me to explain well enough why men of democracies who in general have such narrow affairs, demand from their poets such vast conceptions and portraits so beyond measure.

For their part, writers hardly fail to obey these instincts that they share; they inflate their imagination constantly, and expanding it beyond measure, they make it reach the gigantesque, for which they often abandon the great.

In this way, they hope immediately to attract the eyes of the crowd and to fix them easily on themselves, and they often succeed in doing so; for the crowd, which seeks in poetry only very vast subjects, does not have time to measure exactly the proportions of all the subjects that are presented to it, or taste sure enough to see easily in what way they are disproportionate. The author and the public corrupt each other at the same time.

We have seen, moreover, that among democratic peoples the sources of poetry were beautiful, but not very abundant. You soon end by exhausting them. Finding no more material for the ideal in the real and in the true, poets leave them entirely and create monsters.

I am not afraid that the poetry of democratic peoples may show itself to be timid or that it may stay very close to the earth. I am apprehensive instead that it may lose itself at every moment in the clouds, and that it may finish by portraying entirely imaginary realms. I fear that the works of democratic poets may offer immense and incoherent images, overcharged portraits, bizarre compositions, and that the fantastic beings that have emerged from their mind may sometimes cause the real world to be missed.

CHAPTER 19[a]

Some Observations on the Theater of Democratic Peoples[b]

a. 1. It is in the theater that the literary repercussions of the political revolution first make themselves felt. Spectators are carried away by their secret tastes without having the time to acknowledge it.

2. The literary revolution takes place more suddenly in the theater than elsewhere.

Even in aristocracies the people have their voice in the theater. When the social state becomes democratic, the people become sovereign and overthrow by riot the literary laws of the aristocracy.

3. It is in the theater that the literary revolution is always most visible. The theater puts into relief most of the qualities and all of the defects inherent in democratic literatures.

1. Scorn for erudition. No ancient subjects.
2. Subjects taken from current society and presenting its inconsistencies.
3. Few fixed rules.
4. Style (illegible word) careless.
5. Improbabilities.

4. The Americans show all these instincts when they go to the theater, but they rarely go. Why (YTC, CVf, p. 20).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript:

CH. [perhaps *M* (ed.)] to whom I have just read this chapter (22 December 1838) immediately found 1. that it greatly resembled *literary physiognomy.* 2. that it was a bit serious given the subject. 3. that it would be desirable to introduce more citations and less argumentation./

Doesn't interest begin to tire and isn't this chapter, which is only the development of *literary physiognomy,* too much?

Examine the impression of those who hear it./

I believe, taking everything into account, that this chapter should be deleted.

CH could indicate Charles Stoffels or Ernest de Chabrol. Tocqueville read part of his manuscript to Chateaubriand, but a letter to Beaumont obliges us to place this reading

When the revolution that changed the social and political state of an aristocratic people begins to make itself felt in literature, it is generally in the theater that it is first produced, and it is there that it always remains visible.

The spectator of a dramatic work is in a way taken unprepared by the impression that is suggested to him. He does not have time to search his memory or to consult experts; he does not think about fighting the new literary instincts that are beginning to emerge in him; he yields to them before knowing them.

Authors do not take long to discover which way public taste is thus secretly leaning. They turn their works in that direction; and plays, after serving to make visible the literary revolution that is being prepared, soon end by carrying it out. If you want to judge in advance the literature of a people that is turning toward democracy, study its theater.

Among aristocratic nations themselves, moreover, plays form the most democratic portions of literature. There is no literary enjoyment more accessible to the crowd than those that you experience seeing the stage. Neither preparation nor study is needed to feel them. They grip you amid your preoccupations and your ignorance. When the love, still half crude, for the pleasures of the mind begins to penetrate a class of citizens, it immediately drives them to the theater. The theaters of aristocratic nations have always been full of spectators who do not belong to the aristocracy. It is only in the theater that the upper classes have mingled with the middle and lower classes, and that they have agreed if not to accept the advice of the latter, at least to allow them to give it. It is in the theater that the learned and the

in January 1839. If it concerns *M,* Tocqueville's wife, Mary Mottley, must be considered.

On a loose sheet with the manuscript of the chapter:

Perhaps this chapter should be reduced to only the new ideas that it contains, only recalling all the others in passing.

The new ideas are:

1. It is in the theater that the literary revolution first shows itself.
2. It is there that it is most sudden.
3. It is there that it is always most visible.

lettered have always had the most difficulty making their taste prevail over that of the people, and keeping themselves from being carried away by the taste of the people. There the pit has often laid down the law for the boxes.

[So democracy not only introduces the lower classes into the theater, it makes them dominate there.]

If it is difficult for an aristocracy not to allow the theater to be invaded by the people, you will easily understand that the people must rule there as a master once democratic principles have penetrated laws and mores, when ranks merge and minds like fortunes become more similar, and when the upper class loses its power, its traditions and its leisure, along with its hereditary wealth.

So the tastes and instincts natural to democratic peoples as regards literature, will show themselves first in the theater, and you can predict that they will be introduced there with violence. In written works, the literary laws of the aristocracy will become modified little by little in a general and so to speak legal manner. In the theater, they will be overthrown by riots.

[All that I have said in a general way about the literature of democracies is particularly applicable to the works of the theater.]

The theater puts into relief most of the qualities and nearly all the vices inherent in democratic literatures.

Democratic peoples have only very mediocre esteem for learning, and they scarcely care about what happened in Rome and in Athens; they mean for you to talk about themselves, and they ask for the present to be portrayed.

Consequently, when the heroes and mores of antiquity are often reproduced on stage, and care is taken to remain very faithful to ancient traditions, that is enough to conclude that the democratic classes do not yet dominate the theater.

Racine excuses himself very humbly, in the preface of *Britannicus,* for having made Junie enter among the vestal virgins, where, according to Aulu-Gelle, he says, "no one younger than six or older than nine years of age was

received." It may be believed that he would not have thought to accuse himself or to defend himself from such a crime, if he had written today.[c]

Such a fact enlightens me not only about the state of literature in the times in which it took place, but also about that of the society itself. A democratic theater does not prove that the nation is democratic; for, as we have just seen, even in aristocracies it can happen that democratic tastes influence the stage. But when the spirit of aristocracy alone rules the theater, that demonstrates invincibly that the whole society is aristocratic, and you can boldly conclude that this same learned and lettered class that directs authors commands citizens and leads public affairs.

It is very rare that the refined tastes and haughty tendencies of the aristocracy, when it governs the theater, do not lead it to make a choice, so the speak, in human nature. Certain social conditions interest it principally, and it is pleased to find them portrayed on the stage; certain virtues, and even certain vices, seem to the aristocracy to merit more particularly being reproduced on stage: it accepts the portrayal of these while it removes all the others from its sight. In the theater, as elsewhere, it only wants to find great lords, and it is moved only by kings. It is the same for styles. An aristocracy willingly imposes certain ways of speaking on authors; it wants all to be said with this tone.

The theater therefore often happens to portray only one of the dimensions of man, or even sometimes to represent what is not found in human nature; it rises above human nature and leaves it behind.

In democratic societies spectators do not have such preferences, and they rarely exhibit similar antipathies; they love to find on stage the confused mixture of conditions, of sentiments and ideas that they find before their eyes. The theater becomes more striking, more popular and more true.

Sometimes, however, those who write for the theater in democracies also go beyond human nature, but in another way than their precursors. By dint of wanting to reproduce minutely the small singularities of the present

c. In the margin of a first version that is found in the *rubish* of the chapter:
"Shakespeare, Addison: There where authority does not deign to interfere in the theater" (*Rubish,* 1).

moment and the particular physiognomy of certain men, they forget to relate the general features of the species.

When the democratic classes rule the theater, they introduce as much liberty in the manner of treating the subject as in the very choice of this subject.

The love of the theater being, of all literary tastes, the one most natural to democratic peoples, the number of authors and that of spectators, like that of the performances, increases constantly among these peoples. Such a multitude, composed of such diverse elements and spread over so many different places, cannot accept the same rules and be subject to the same laws. No agreement is possible among very numerous judges who do not know where to meet; each separately makes his judgment. If the effect of democracy is in general to make literary rules and conventions doubtful, in the theater it abolishes them entirely, in order to substitute only the caprice of each author and each public.

It is equally in the theater above all that what I have already said elsewhere in a general way concerning style and art in democratic literatures is revealed. When you read the criticism brought forth by the dramatic works of the century of Louis XIV, you are surprised to see the great esteem of the public for verisimilitude, and the importance that it placed on the fact that a man, remaining always true to himself, did nothing that could not be easily explained and understood. It is equally surprising how much value was then attached to the forms of language and what small quarrels over words were made with dramatic authors.

It seems that the men of the century of Louis XIV attached a very exaggerated value to these details, which are noticed in the study but that elude the stage.[d] For, after all, the principal object of a play is to be presented, and its first merit is to stir emotion. That came from the fact that the spectators of this period were at the same time the readers. Leaving the

d. "<What made the men of the century of Louis XIV want to find only princes and kings on the tragic stage was a sentiment analogous to that which made Alexander say, when requested to appear at the Olympic games: I would willingly go if only kings raced there>" (*Rubish,* 1). Tocqueville here takes up a known episode, drawn from the *Life of Alexander* of Plutarch.

performance, they waited at home for the writer, in order to complete their judgment of him.

In democracies, you listen to plays, but you do not read them. Most of those who attend stage plays are not seeking the pleasures of the mind, but the intense emotions of the heart. They are not waiting to find a work of literature, but a spectacle, and provided that the author speaks the language of the country correctly enough to make himself understood and that the characters excite curiosity and awaken sympathy, they are content; without asking anything more of the fiction, they immediately reenter the real world. So style there is less necessary; for on the stage observation of these rules escapes more and more.

As for verisimilitudes, it is impossible to be often new, unexpected, rapid, while remaining faithful to them. So they are neglected, and the public pardons it. You can count on the fact that they will not worry about the roads you have led them along, if you lead them finally to an object that touches them. They will never reproach you for having moved them in spite of the rules.

[Two things must be clearly distinguished.

Complicated intrigues, forced effects, improbability are often due to scorn for art and sometimes to ignorance of it. These faults are found in all theaters that are beginning, and for this reason aristocratic theaters have often provided an example of them, because it is ordinarily aristocracy that leads the youthful period of peoples. The oddities, coarseness and extravagance that are sometimes found in Lope de Vega and in Shakespeare[e] do not prove that these great men followed the natural taste of the aristocracy, but only that they were the first to write for it.[f] Their genius subsequently perpetuated their errors.[g] When a great dramatic author does not purge the stage of the vices that he finds there, he fixes them

e. The *rubish* also names Calderón.

f. "Memoir of Grimm. Deep discussion of what there is of the improbable" (*Rubish,* 1). It perhaps concerns Friedrich M. Grimm, *Nouveaux mémoires secrets et inédits historiques, politiques, anecdotiques et littéraires* . . . , (Paris: Lerouge-Wolf, 1834), 2 vols.

g. Variant in the *rubish:* "This is seen in the renaissance of letters among all peoples even aristocracies. See Lope de Vega, Shakespeare and the French before Corneille. When a great genius . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

there, and all those who follow imitate those courtiers of Alexander who found it easier to tilt their heads to the side like their master than to conquer Asia.

Democratic writers know in general the conventions of the stage, and the rules of dramatic art, but often they willingly neglect them in order to go faster or to strike more forcefully.]

The Americans bring to full light the different instincts that I have just depicted, when they go to the theater.[h] But it must be recognized that there is still only a small number of them who go. Although spectators and spectacles have prodigiously increased since forty years ago in the United States, the population still goes to this type of amusement only with extreme reticence.

That is due to particular causes that the reader already knows and that it is sufficient to recall to him in two words.

The Puritans, who founded the American republics, were not only enemies of pleasure; they professed in addition an entirely special horror of the theater. They considered it as an abominable diversion, and as long as their spirit reigned unrivaled, dramatic presentations were absolutely unknown among them. These opinions of the first fathers of the colony left profound traces in the mind of their descendants.

The extreme regularity of habits and the great rigidity of mores that are seen in the United States, moreover, have not been very favorable to the development of theatrical art until now.

There are no subjects for drama in a country that has not witnessed great political catastrophes[j] and where love always leads by a direct and easy road to marriage. Men who use every day of the week for making

h. I am moreover obliged to admit, and perhaps it is proper to do so, that in this matter America cannot serve as an example. By what is happening in the United States, it is difficult to judge the direction that the American democracy would give to theatrical art, since the American democracy has so to speak no theaters. Forty years ago I do not think that you would ever have attended a dramatic presentation in this part of the New World. Since then halls for spectacles [v: theaters] have been built in two or three great cities of the Union, but these places of pleasure are closed part of the year and during the rest of the time the native population frequents them little (*Rubish,* 1). Cf. Beaumont, *Marie,* I, pp. 394–96.

j. The manuscript reads: "public catastrophes."

their fortune and Sunday for praying to God do not lend themselves to the comic muse.

A single fact suffices to show that the theater is not very popular in the United States.

The Americans, whose laws authorize freedom and even license of speech in everything, have nonetheless subjected dramatic authors to a kind of censorship.[k] Theatrical presentations can only take place when the administrators of the town allow them. This demonstrates clearly that peoples are like individuals. They give themselves without caution to their principal passions, and then they are very careful not to yield to the impetus of tastes that they do not have.

There is no portion of literature that is tied by tighter and more numerous bonds to the current state of society than the theater.

The theater of one period can never suit the following period if, between the two, an important revolution has changed mores and laws.

The great writers of another century are still studied. But plays written for another public are no longer attended. Dramatic authors of past time live only in books.

The traditional taste of a few men, vanity, fashion, the genius of an actor can for a time sustain or bring back an aristocratic theater within a democracy; but soon it collapses by itself. It is not overthrown; it is abandoned.

k. With a note in the *rubish:* "Ask new clarifications from Niles" (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 20[a]

Of Some Tendencies Particular to Historians in Democratic Centuries[b]

Historians who write in aristocratic centuries ordinarily make all events depend on the particular will and the mood of certain men, and they readily link the most important revolutions to the slightest accidents. They wisely make the smallest causes stand out, and often they do not see the greatest ones.

Historians who live in democratic centuries show completely opposite tendencies.

Most of them attribute to the individual almost no influence on the destiny of the species, or to citizens on the fate of the people. But, in return, they give great general causes to all the small particular facts. [In their eyes,

a. 1. Aristocratic historians attribute all events to a few men. Democratic historians are led to deny the particular influence of men on the destiny of the species and of the people and to search only for general causes. There is exaggeration on both sides. In all events, one part must be attributed to general facts and another to particular influences. But the relationship varies depending on the times. General facts explain more things in democratic centuries and particular influences fewer.

2. Democratic historians are led not only to attribute each fact to a great cause, but also to link facts together and to produce historical systems.

3. Not only are they inclined to contest the power of individuals to lead peoples, but they are easily led to contest the ability of peoples to modify their destinies by themselves and they subject them to a sort of blind fatality (YTC, CVf, p. 21).

One of the titles of the chapter in the *rubish* is: INFLUENCE OF EQUALITY OF CONDITIONS ON THE MANNER OF ENVISAGING AND WRITING HISTORY.

b. On the jacket of the manuscript, in pencil: "Historians of antiquity did not treat history like Mignet and company."

all events are linked together by a tight and necessary chain, and therefore they sometimes end up by denying nations control over themselves and by contesting the liberty of having been able to do what they did.][c] These contrasting tendencies can be explained.

When historians in aristocratic centuries cast their eyes on the world theater, they notice first of all a very small number of principal actors who lead the whole play. These great characters, who keep themselves at the front of the stage, stop their view and hold it; while they apply themselves to uncovering the secret motives that make the latter act and speak, they forget the rest.

The importance of the things that they see a few men do gives them an exaggerated idea of the influence that one man is able to exercise, and naturally disposes them to believe that you must always go back to the particular action of an individual to explain the movements of the crowd.

When, on the contrary, all citizens are independent of each other, and when each one of them is weak, you do not discover any one of them who exercises a very great or, above all, a very enduring power over the mass. At first view, individuals seem absolutely powerless over the mass, and you would say that society moves all by itself by the free and spontaneous participation of all the men who compose it.[d]

That naturally leads the human mind to search for the general reason

c. In the margin: "<Perhaps to delete. This relates only to the last idea of the chapter.>" Cf. p. 858.

A note in the *Rubish* explains: "This chapter is very closely linked to that on *general ideas.* It must be *combined* there or be kept very *separate* from it" (*Rubish,* 1).

d. "Be careful while treating this subject about wanting to portray *history* and not *historians,* what is happening in the world and not the *manner in which historians* explain it" (*Rubish,* 1).

In the article "Movement of the French Press in 1836," *Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, X, 1837, pp. 453–98, which Tocqueville utilized for the draft of chapter 2, you find similar affirmations. "It is no longer only a matter," you read on p. 464, "as in the past, of putting in the forefront the figures of great men and of moving into the background the vague and unappreciated action of the masses. Our century, which wants to know everything and which doubts everything, seems to prefer facts and proofs to these striking tableaux in which the art of composition and the wisdom of judgments testify to the power of the writer better than the clutter of citations."

that has been able to strike so many minds all at once in this way and turn them simultaneously in the same direction.[e]

I am very persuaded that, among democratic nations themselves, the genius, the vices or the virtues of certain individuals delay or precipitate the natural course of the destiny of the people; but these sorts of fortuitous and secondary causes are infinitely more varied, more hidden, more complicated, less powerful, and consequently more difficult to disentangle and to trace in times of equality than in the centuries of aristocracy, when it is only a matter of analyzing, amid general facts, the particular action of a single man or of a few men.[f]

The historian soon becomes tired of such a work; his mind becomes lost amid this labyrinth, and, not able to succeed in seeing clearly and in bringing sufficiently to light individual influences, he denies them. He prefers to speak to us about the nature of races, about the physical constitution of a country, or about the spirit of civilization [<great words that I cannot hear said without involuntarily recalling the abhorrence of a vacuum that was

e. "<That necessarily leads their minds back toward the search for general causes, about which you always have at least something to say, and often they content themselves with the first one they find>" (*Rubish,* 1).

f. There are two ideas in this chapter which must not be confused.

A people can have its destiny modified or changed by the accidental influence of a powerful man, like Napoleon, I suppose.

Or, as well, by an accident due to chance such as a plague, the loss of a battle . . .

You can refuse to believe in the influence of individuals and believe in that of accidents.

In democratic centuries, the influence of *individuals* is infinitely smaller than in aristocratic centuries, but the influence of *accidents* is not less.

Now, the modern historical system consists of saying not only that individuals cannot modify .-.-.-.- peoples, but also that *accidents* cannot do so. So that the nature of some battle, for example, would not have been able definitively to prevent some nation from succumbing, because there was a sequence of old causes that destined it invincibly to perish.

It is clear that all that I say in the preceding chapter applies to *individuals* and not to *accidents.* This is exaggerated because, when you go back to the origin of accidents, you almost always arrive at *individual* action" (*Rubish,* 1).

attributed to nature before the heaviness of air was discovered>]. That shortens his work, and, at less cost, better satisfies the reader.[g]

M. de Lafayette said somewhere in his *Mémoires*[h] that the exaggerated system of general causes brought marvelous consolations to mediocre public men. I add that it gives admirable consolations to mediocre historians. It always provides them with a few great reasons that promptly pull them through at the most difficult point in their book, and it favors the weakness or laziness of their minds, all the while honoring its depth.

For me, I think that there is no period when one part of the events of this world must not be attributed to very general facts, and another to very particular influences. These two causes are always found; only their relationship differs. General facts explain more things in democratic centuries than in aristocratic centuries, and particular influences fewer. In times of aristocracy, it is the opposite; particular influences are stronger, and general causes are weaker, as long as you do not consider as a general cause the very fact of inequality of conditions, which allows a few individuals to thwart the natural tendencies of all the others.

So historians who try to portray what is happening in democratic societies are right to give a large role to general causes and to apply themselves principally to discovering them; but they are wrong to deny entirely the particular action of individuals, because it is difficult to find and to follow

g. In the margin: "<This is not in perfect agreement with what precedes and draws the mind in another direction. What I say above is that historians prefer looking for general causes than for particular facts. What I say here is that they are content with bad general reasons, which is another idea. My comparison applies only to the last one, for the *heaviness of air* is a general cause, as well as the *abhorrence of a vacuum.* Perhaps delete.>"

h. Marquis de Lafayette, *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits du général Lafayette* (Paris: H. Fournier aîné, 1837–1838), 6 vols. In May 1837, Tocqueville received from Corcelle, who was the editor, the first three volumes of this work. It is probable that the author, who did not sympathize with the general, did not read his memoirs (we know that he considered him to be a well-intentioned man but with a *mediocre mind*), and that he found this quotation in the second part of the review done by Sainte-Beuve (*Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, 15, 1838, pp. 355–81, in which the same quotation appears on page 359).

it [and to content themselves often with great words when great causes elude them].

Not only are historians who live in democratic centuries drawn to giving a great cause to each fact, but also they are led to linking facts and making a system emerge.

In aristocratic centuries, since the attention of historians is diverted at every moment toward individuals, the sequence of events escapes them, or rather they do not believe in such a sequence. The thread of history seems to them broken at every instant by the passage of a man.

In democratic centuries, on the contrary, the historian, seeing far fewer actors and many more actions, can easily establish a relationship and a methodical order among them.

Ancient literature, which has left us such beautiful histories, offers not a single great historical system, while the most miserable modern literatures are swarming with them. It seems that ancient historians did not make enough use of these general theories that our historians are always ready to abuse.

Those who write in democratic centuries have another, more dangerous tendency.

When the trace of the action of individuals or nations becomes lost, it often happens that you see the world move without uncovering the motor. Since it becomes very difficult to see and to analyze the reasons that, acting separately on the will of each citizen, end by producing the movement of the people, you are tempted to believe that the movement is not voluntary and that societies, without knowing it, obey a superior force that dominates them.

Even if you should discover on earth the general fact that directs the particular will of all individuals, that does not save human liberty. A cause vast enough to be applied at the same time to millions of men, and strong enough to bend all of them in the same direction, easily seems irresistible; after seeing that you yielded to it, you are very close to believing that it could not be resisted.

So historians who live in democratic times not only deny to a few citizens the power to act on the destiny of the people, they also take away from peoples themselves the ability to modify their own fate, and subject them

either to an inflexible providence or to a sort of blind fatality. According to these historians, each nation is invincibly tied, by its position, its origin, its antecedents, its nature, to a certain destiny that all its efforts cannot change. They make the generations stand together with each other, and, going back in this way, from age to age and from necessary events to necessary events, to the origin of the world, they make a tight and immense chain that envelops the entire human species and binds it.

It is not enough for them to show how facts happened; they like as well to reveal that it could not have happened otherwise. They consider a nation that has reached a certain place in its history, and assert that it has been forced to follow the road that led it there. That is easier than teaching what it could have done to take a better route.[j]

It seems, while reading the historians of aristocratic ages and particularly those of antiquity, that, in order to become master of his fate and govern his fellows, man has only to know how to control himself. You would say, while surveying the histories written in our time, that man can do nothing, either for himself or around him. The historians of antiquity taught how to command; those of our days scarcely teach anything except how to obey. In their writings, the author often appears great, but humanity is always small.

If this doctrine of fatality, which has so many attractions for those who write history in democratic times, by passing from the writers to their readers, in this way penetrated the entire mass of citizens and took hold of the public mind, you can predict that it would soon paralyze the movement of new societies and would reduce Christians to Turks.[k]

I will say, moreover, that such a doctrine is particularly dangerous in this period in which we live; our contemporaries are all too inclined to doubt free will, because each of them feels limited on all sides by his weakness,

j. "I believe that in nearly each instant of their existence nations, like men, are free to modify their fate" (*Rubish,* 1).

k. "Show how the idea of the powerlessness of individuals over the mass leads them to the idea of the powerlessness of the mass over itself and thus leads them to the fatality of the Moslems" (*Rubish,* 1).

but they still readily grant strength and independence to men gathered in a social body. Care must be taken not to obscure this idea, for it is a matter of lifting up souls and not finally demoralizing them.[m]

m. In the *rubish* you find this small chapter on religious eloquence, deleted in the final version:

RELIGIOUS ELOQUENCE OR PREACHING.

.-.-.-.-.- the influence that democracy exercises on works of the human mind, it would probably have been enough for me to reveal how it modifies the language of the pulpit.

[In the margin: Perhaps and even probably delete this chapter. It cannot be applied to America. In America, by exception, religious beliefs are very firm and the language of priests is not a plea in favor of Christianity.]

There is nothing so little variable by their nature as religions and it cannot be otherwise. The true religion rests on absolute truth; other religions claim to be supported by it; so all are immobile, and it is easier to destroy them than to modify them.

This immobility extends to everything that is related to religion no matter how distantly. There is no religious custom so unimportant that it is not more difficult to change [v: destroy] than the constitution of a people.

So when any cause whatsoever leads men to vary style and method in holy things, be sure that this is only one of the last effects of a much more general revolution and that the same cause had already long ago changed the manner of treating all other subjects.

.-.-.-.- Catholic and I enter a church. I see the priest mounting the steps of the pulpit. He is young. He wears priestly vestments, but beyond that there is already nothing of the traditional or of the conventional in his bearing, in his gestures, or in his voice. He doesn't say "My brothers," but "Sirs." He doesn't recite, but he improvises. He does not talk about the growing pain that our sins cause him; our good works do not fill him with ineffable joy. He engages his listener hand to hand, and armed like him, takes him on. He feels that it is no longer a matter of touching us, but of convincing us. He addresses himself not to faith, but to reason; he doesn't impose belief, he discusses it and wants to have it freely accepted. He does not go to search for arguments in the old arsenal of scholastic theology, in the writings of the Doctors, any more than in the decrees of the Popes and the decisions of the Councils. He borrows his proofs from secular science; he draws his comparisons from everyday things; he bases himself on the most general, the clearest and most elementary truths [v: notions] of human philosophy.

He cites the poets and orators of today almost as much as the Fathers of the Church. Rarely does it happen that he speaks Latin, and I cannot prevent myself from suspecting that the *Kyrie Eleison* of the Mass is all the Greek he knows.

Sometimes disorganized, incorrect, incomplete, he is nearly always original, brilliant, unexpected, above all fruitful. Give up reading him, but go to hear him.

If, back in the solitude of your dwelling, you happen to compare the man whom you have just heard with the great Christian orators of past centuries, you will discover, not without terror, what the strange power that moves the world is able to do; and you will understand that democracy, after remaking in passing all the ephemeral [v: changing] institutions of men, finally reaches the things most immobile by their nature, and that, not able to change the substance of Christianity, which is eternal, it at least modifies the language and the form (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 21[a]

Of Parliamentary Eloquence in the United States[b]

a. 1. The discussions of the English Parliament are led by only a few men, which makes them clear, plain and concise. Why it is not the same in Congress.

1. In aristocratic countries, the members of the legislature study the parliamentary art in advance and for a longer time. This reason is good, but insufficient.

2. The habit of hierarchy and subordination that men have in aristocratic society follows them into the assembly. It is not the same in democratic countries.

3. Aristocratic deputies, all being of considerable importance by themselves, are easily consoled about not playing a role in the assembly and do not want a mediocre one. Democratic deputies have in the country only the rank that they have in the assembly; that necessarily pushes them ahead.

4. They are, moreover, pushed to speak by the voters; and as they depend much more on the voters, they yield to them on this point.

2. That is the petty side of democratic discussions. Here is the great one.

1. Since there are no distinct classes, orators always speak to and about the whole nation.

2. Since they cannot rely on the (illegible word) the privileges of wealth, of corps, or of persons, they are obliged to go back to the general truths provided by the examination of human nature. That gives a great character of grandeur to their eloquence and pushes its effects to the furthest ends of the earth (YTC, CVf, pp. 21–23).

b. There would be two subjects that you could still treat here:

1. The first would consist of finding out if *eloquence* strictly speaking is as natural to democratic assemblies as to others. I do not think so.

2. Why the reports of the Presidents to Congress have always been, until now, so simple, so clear, so noble. This would be more appropriate to the subject" (*Rubish,* 1).

On the first page of a draft of the chapter: "This chapter is an attempt. It probably must be deleted" (*Rubish,* 1). Tocqueville adds in another place: "I believe that nothing must be said about this subject. Since eloquence of the pulpit, which is the most conventional, is modified by democracy, the mind is sufficiently struck by the power of the latter on all types of eloquence" (*Rubish,* 1).

Among aristocratic peoples all men stand together and depend on each other; among all men there is a hierarchical bond by the aid of which each one can be kept in his place and the whole body can be kept in obedience. Something analogous is always found within the political assemblies of these peoples. Parties there line up naturally behind certain leaders, whom they obey by a kind of instinct that is only the result of habits contracted elsewhere. They bring to the small society of the assembly the mores of the larger society.

[In the public assemblies of aristocratic nations there are only a few men who act as spokesmen. All the others assent and keep quiet. Orators speak only when something is useful to the party. They say only what can serve the general interests of the party and they do not needlessly repeat what has already been said. The discussion is clear, rapid and concise.

Breadth and depth are often lacking in the *discussions* of the Parliament of England, but the debate is almost always conducted admirably and speeches are very pertinent to the subject. ≠It is not always so in Congress.≠

I at first believed that this way of treating public affairs came from the long use that the English have of parliamentary life. But it must be clearly admitted that it is due to some other cause, since the Americans, with the same experience, do not follow the same method.

In the democratic countries most accustomed to the representative regime, it often happens that a great number of those who are part of the assemblies have not sufficiently reflected in advance about the suitable way to act there. The reason is that among these peoples public life is rarely a career. You go there by chance; you soon depart. It is a road that you cross and that you do not follow. So to it you bring your natural enlightenment, and not an acquired knowledge.

In aristocratic countries that have had assemblies for a long time, it is not the same. Since there is only a small number of men who can enter national councils, those men apply themselves to becoming part of those councils and study in advance the art of how to conduct themselves there. Since the same men are part of the legislature over a long period of time, they have the time to recognize the methods that best serve the conduct of affairs, and they are always numerous enough to force the new arrivals to conform.

This reason seems good, but it does [not (ed.)] suffice to explain the difference that is noticeable here between the Americans and the English. In the United States, deliberative bodies are so numerous and public assemblies so multiplied that there is no man, who has reached maturity, who has not very often had the occasion to enter into some gathering of this type and who has not been able to see the game. If there are no classes in America that are specially destined for public affairs, all classes get actively involved and constantly think about them. Almost all of even those who remain in private life thus receive a political education. So you must look for a more general and deeper cause than the one indicated above.

Not only do the Americans not always have very precise notions about the parliamentary art, but also they are more strongly inclined to violate the rules of that art when they know them.]

In democratic countries, a great number of citizens often happen to head toward the same point; but each one marches or at least professes to march there only by himself. Accustomed not to regulate his movements except according to his personal impulses, he yields with difficulty to receiving his rules from outside. This taste for and this practice of independence follow him into national councils. If he agrees to associate himself with others for the pursuit of the same plan, he at least wants to remain master of his own way of cooperating in the common success.

That is why, in democratic countries, parties so impatiently endure someone leading them and appear subordinate only when the danger is very great. Even so, the authority of leaders, which in these circumstances can go as far as making parties act and speak, almost never extends to the power of making parties keep quiet.

Among aristocratic peoples, the members of political assemblies are at the same time members of the aristocracy. Each one of them possesses by himself a high and stable rank, and the place that he occupies in the assembly is often less important in his eyes than the one that he fills in the country. That consoles him for not playing a role in the discussion of public affairs, and disposes him not to seek a mediocre role with too much ardor.

In America, it ordinarily happens that the deputy amounts to something only by his position in the assembly. So he is constantly tormented by the

need to gain importance, and he feels a petulant desire to bring his ideas fully to light every moment.[c]

He is pushed in this direction not only by his vanity, but also by that of his constituents and by the continual necessity to please them.

Among aristocratic peoples, the member of the legislature rarely has a narrow dependence on voters; for them he is often in some way a necessary representative; sometimes he holds them in a narrow dependency, and if they come finally to refuse him their vote, he easily has himself appointed elsewhere; or, renouncing a political career, he shuts himself up in an idleness that still has splendor.

In a democratic country, like the United States, the deputy hardly ever has an enduring hold on the mind of his constituents. However small the electoral body, democratic instability makes it change face constantly. So it must be captivated every day. He is never sure of them; and if they abandon him, he is immediately without resources; for he does not naturally have a position elevated enough to be easily noticed by those who are not nearby; and, in the complete independence in which citizens live, he cannot hope that his friends or the government will easily impose him on an electoral body that will not know him. So it is in the district that he represents that all the seeds of his fortune are sown; it is from this corner of the earth that he must emerge in order to rise to command the people and to influence the destinies of the world.

Thus, it is natural that, in democratic countries, the members of political assemblies think more about their constituents than about their party, while in aristocracies, they attend more to their party than to their constituents.[d]

c. I do not believe, moreover, that what happens on this point in the United States indicates a general law applicable to all democracies. I believe that there exists at the bottom of the soul of a people a secret disposition that leads it to keep the most capable away from power when it can do so without danger. The people, moreover, when it leads affairs, is like kings who, Montesquieu says, always imagine that their courtiers are their best subjects. Peoples are princes in this. But I believe that this fatal tendency can be combatted naturally by circumstances or artificially by laws, and in America both favor it (*Rubish,* 1).

d. Add that the member of a democratic legislature, just as he does not have the natural taste for parliamentary discipline, does not have a particular interest in sub-

Now, what must be said to please voters is not always what would be suitable for serving well the political opinion that they profess.

The general interest of a party is often that the deputy who is a member never speak about the great public affairs that he understands badly; that he speak little about the small affairs that would hinder the march of the great one; and most often finally, that he keep completely quiet. To maintain silence is the most useful service that a mediocre speaker can render to public matters.

But this is not the way that the voters understand it.

The population of a district charges a citizen to take part in the government of the State, because it has conceived a very grand idea of his merit. Since men appear greater in proportion to being surrounded by smaller objects, it may be believed that the rarer the talents among those represented, the higher the opinion that will be held about the representative. So it often happens that the less the voters have to expect from their deputy, the more they will hope from him; and, however incompetent he may be, they cannot fail to require from him signal efforts that correspond to the rank that they give him.

Apart from the legislator of the State, the voters see also in their representative the natural protector of the district in the legislature; they are not even far from considering him as the agent of each one of those who elected him, and they imagine that he will display no less ardor insisting on their particular interests than on those of the country.

Thus, the voters hold it as certain in advance that the deputy they will choose will be an orator; that he will speak often if he can, and that, in the case where he would have to limit himself, he will at least try hard in his

mitting himself to it. In aristocracies, the leaders of parties are often men powerful in themselves, or men who have easily at their disposal all of the party forces. They have in their hands great means to serve and to harm. It frequently happens, for example, that they are in a position to impose their choice on the voters. The party itself, hierarchically organized in the society as in the assembly, can force all the members to cooperate toward a general end that it sets.

In democracies, on the contrary, parties are not better organized outside the assemblies than within. Within parties, there exists a common will to act, but not a government that directs it. So the deputy has truly speaking nothing either to hope or to fear except from his constituents (*Rubish,* 1).

rare speeches to include the examination of all the great affairs of the State along with the account of all the petty grievances that they themselves have complained about; so that, not able to appear often, he shows on each occasion that he knows what to do, and, instead of spouting forth incessantly, he every now and then compresses his remarks entirely into a small scope, providing in this way a kind of brilliant and complete summary of his constituents and of himself. For this price, they promise their next votes.

This pushes into despair honest, mediocre men who, knowing themselves, would not have appeared on their own. The deputy, carried away in this way, speaks up to the great distress of his friends, and, throwing himself imprudently into the middle of the most celebrated orators, he muddles the debate and tires the assembly.

All the laws that tend to make the elected more dependent on the voter therefore modify not only the conduct of the legislators, as I noted elsewhere, but also their language. They influence at the very same time public affairs and the manner of speaking about them.

[I think as well that the more the electoral body is divided into small parts, the more discussions will become droning within the legislative body. You can count on the fact that such a system will fill the assembly with mediocre men[*] and that all the mediocre men whom it sends there will make as many efforts to appear as if they were superior men.]

[*]. Note:

This effect is explained by two very perceptible reasons.

The smaller the electoral district, the more limited is the view of the voter and the more his good choice depends on the chance birth of a capable man near him.

So small electoral circumscriptions will necessarily produce a crowd of mediocre representatives, for the superior men of a nation are not spread equally over the different points of its surface.

The smallness of the electoral body will, moreover, very often prevent voters from choosing those men when by chance they are found near them.

When voters are very numerous and spread over a great area, there is only a small number of them who can have personal relationships with the man they choose, and they elect him because of the merit attributed to him. When they are very few in number, they readily name him because of the friendship that they have for him. The election becomes always an affair of a coterie and often of a family. In an election of this type the superior man loses all of his natural advantages. He can scarcely aspire to stay equal.

There is, so to speak, not a member of Congress who agrees to return home without having given at least one speech, or who bears being interrupted before he is able to include within the limits of his harangue everything that can be said about what is useful to the twenty-four states that compose the Union, and especially to the district he represents. So he puts successively before the minds of his listeners great general truths that he often does not notice himself and that he points out only in a confused way, and small highly subtle particularities that he does not find and explain very easily. Consequently, it often happens that, within this great body, discussion becomes vague and muddled, and it seems to crawl toward the goal that is proposed rather than marching toward it.

Something analogous will always be revealed, I believe, in the public assemblies of democracies.

Happy circumstances and good laws could succeed in drawing to the legislature of a democratic people men much more noteworthy than those who are sent by the Americans to Congress; but you will never prevent the mediocre men who are found in it from putting themselves on public display, smugly and on all sides.

The evil does not appear entirely curable to me, because it is due not only to the regulations of the assembly, but also to its constitution and even to that of the country.

The inhabitants of the United States seem themselves to consider the matter from this point of view, and they testify to their long practice of parliamentary life not by abstaining from bad speeches, but by subjecting themselves courageously to hearing them. They resign themselves to hearing them as if to an evil that experience had made them recognize as inevitable.

[<Some insist that sometimes they are sleeping, but they never grumble.>]

We have shown the petty side of political discussions in democracies; let us reveal the great one.

In YTC, CVk, 1, p. 82, next to this fragment, you find this note: "This should probably be entirely deleted. Constant harping on electoral matters./

"I would in fact delete that.

"To delete."

What has happened for the past one hundred fifty years in the Parliament of England has never caused a great stir outside; the ideas and sentiments expressed by orators have never found much sympathy among the very peoples who found themselves placed closest to the great theater of British liberty, while, from the moment when the first debates took place in the small colonial assemblies of America in the period of the revolution, Europe was moved.[e]

That was due not only to particular and fortuitous circumstances, but also to general and lasting causes.

I see nothing more admirable or more powerful than a great orator discussing great affairs within a democratic assembly. Since there is never a class that has its representatives in charge of upholding its interests, it is always to the whole nation, and in the name of the whole nation that they speak.[f] That enlarges thought and elevates language.[g]

Since precedents there have little sway; since there are no more privileges linked to certain properties or rights inherent to certain bodies or certain men, the mind is forced to go back to general truths drawn from human nature, in order to treat the particular affairs that concern it. Out of that

e. "The English orators of the last century constantly quoted Latin and even Greek at the rostrum.

"Their sons of America quote only Shakespeare, the democratic author par excellence" (*Rubish,* 1).

f. The political discussions of a small democratic people cause a stir in the entire universe. Not only because other peoples, also turning toward democracy, have analogous interests, but also because the political discussions of a democratic people, however small it may be, always have a character of generality that makes them interesting to the human species. They talk about man in general and treat rights that he holds by his nature, which is the same everywhere.

Among aristocratic peoples it is almost always a question of the particular rights of a class, which interests only this class or at most the people among whom the class is found.

This explains the influence of the French revolution even apart from the state of Europe, and in contrast, the slight stir caused by the debates of the English Parliament (*Rubish,* 1).

g. In the margin: "≠I would say something analogous about our time and about ourselves. The debates of our chambers immediately cause a stir in the entire universe and agitate all classes in each country.≠"

is born, in the political discussions of a democratic people, however small it may be, a character of generality that often makes those discussions captivating to the human species. All men are interested in them because it is a question of man, who is everywhere the same.

Among the greatest aristocratic peoples, on the contrary, the most general questions are almost always dealt with by a few particular reasons drawn from the customs of a period or from the rights of a class; this interests only the class in question, or at most the people among whom this class is found.

It is to this cause as much as to the grandeur of the French nation, and to the favorable dispositions of the peoples who hear it, that you must attribute the great effect that our political discussions sometimes produce in the world.

Our orators often speak to all men, even when they are only addressing their fellow citizens.[h]

h. In the *Rubish,* after the rough drafts of these chapters, you find a jacket with these notes:

> [At the head: Influence of equality on education./
> There would have been many things to say about this subject, but I have already so many things in the book, that this one must, I believe, be left aside.]
> Influence of democracy on the education of men or rather their instruction is a necessary chapter. The useful and practical direction that it gives, the change in methods that it brings about. The study of ancient languages, theoretical sciences, speculative studies that they subordinate to other studies.
> To place somewhere in the chapter on *ideas.*
> [To the side: To put a small chapter VI before the large chapter on sciences, literature and the arts, which must be the VIIth.] (*Rubish,* 1).

A draft contains, for the chapter on education, the following plan:

> [As title on the jacket] Influence of democracy on ideas./
> Of academic institutions under democracy.
> An academy having the purpose of keeping minds on a certain path, of imposing a method on them, is contrary to the genius of democracy; it is an aristocratic institution.
> An academy having the goal of making the men who apply themselves to the arts or to the sciences famous and giving them at State expense the comfort and leisure that the democratic social state often denies to them, is an institution that can be not to the taste of a democratic nation, but one that is never contrary to and can some-

times be necessary to the existence of a democracy. It is an eminently democratic institution.

[Inside, on a page] Of the need for paid learned bodies in democracies. This need increases as peoples turn toward democracy.

This truth understood with difficulty by the democracy. Opposite natural inclination that you must combat. The Americans give way to it.

Effect of this: science left to the ordinary encouragement that democracy can provide, that is to say that the men who are working produce only applications, no theories.

[To the side: Ask Monsieur Biot for ideas.]

That the English set about badly to encourage the sciences. They give easy and honorable rest in the hope of work. These things must be proposed as the fruit of work.

Elsewhere: "Of Education in the United States and in democratic countries in general.

"Perhaps I should begin by portraying man in infancy and in the family before leading him to manhood.

"The trouble with this plan is that egoism dominates even the primordial relations" (YTC, CVa, pp. 2–3). Jean-Baptiste Biot, scientist and political writer of legitimist tendencies, was a professor at the Collège de France. On Tocqueville and the question of education after *Democracy,* see Edward Gargan, "The Silence of Tocqueville on Education," *Historical Reflections,* 7, 1980, pp. 565–75.

SECOND PART

Influence of Democracy on the Sentiments of the Americans[a]

a. [As the title] Influence of democracy on sentiments, tastes, or mores./
Ideas that must never be entirely lost from view.

After making known each flaw or each quality inherent in democracy, try to point out with as much *precision* as possible the means that can be taken to attenuate the first and to develop the second. *Example.* Men in democracies are naturally led to concentrate on their interests. To draw them away from their interests as much as possible, to spiritualize them as much as possible, and finally if possible to connect and merge particular interest and general interest, so that you scarcely know how to distinguish the one from the other.

That is the political side of the work that must never be allowed to be entirely lost from view.

But do not do that in a monotonous and tiring way, for fear of boredom, or in too practical and too detailed a way, for fear of leaving myself open to criticism.

Reserve a part of these things for the *introduction of the final chapter* (YTC, CVa, pp. 31–32).

On the back of the jacket of the *Rubish* that contains the drafts of the part on material enjoyments and that bears number X:

First chapters on sentiments./
First system./
Democracy leads men toward the taste for material well-being.
It leads them to commerce, industry, to everything that is produced quickly.
It gives birth to an immoderate desire for happiness in this world.
It favors restlessness of the heart.
Here perhaps spirit of religion (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 1[a]

Why Democratic Peoples Show a More Ardent and More Enduring Love for Equality Than for Liberty[b]

a. This chapter, one of the best known of *Democracy,* is not found in the manuscript, where you pass directly from the previous chapter (number 19) to the one on individualism (number 20). Nor does it appear in notebook CVf.

A first version of it exists in pages 1 to 14 of notebook CVk, 2. The inclusion in the final version is due to the insistence of Louis de Kergorlay, as is witnessed by this note on the jacket that contains it:

> L[ouis (ed.)]. thinks that this piece must *absolutely* appear in the work, either in the current form or by transporting the ideas elsewhere. I believe in fact that he is right. I see that it could be introduced in this way into the present chapter, which would then be divided into three principal ideas:
>
> 1. How equality gives the idea and the taste for political liberty.
> 2. How in the centuries of equality men are much less attached to being free than to remaining equal.
> 3. How equality suggests ideas and tastes to them that can make them lose liberty and lead them to servitude.
>
> In this way the piece would remain more or less as it is. It would only have to be concluded differently and in such a way as to fit into the general idea of the chapter, more or less like this:
>
> "Thus, love of liberty cannot be the principal passion of men during democratic centuries and it occupies in their heart only the space left for it by another passion."
>
> Before including this section, to see clearly whether all that I say there is not a useless repetition of what I already said in the following sections. I am afraid it is (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 1–2). See note a for p. 1200.

b. The *rubish* of chapter 10 of this part contains a jacket cover on which you can read: "How equality of ranks suggests to men the taste for liberty [v: equality] and why democratic peoples love equality better than liberty./

"Piece that I will probably make the second section of the chapter and that must be

The first and most intense of the passions given birth by equality of conditions, I do not need to say, is the love of this very equality. So no one will be surprised that I talk about it before all the others.

Everyone has noted that in our time, and especially in France, this passion for equality has a greater place in the human heart every day. It has been said a hundred times that our contemporaries have a much more ardent and much more tenacious love for equality than for liberty; but I do not find that we have yet adequately gone back to the causes of this fact. I am going to try.[c]

reexamined with care while reviewing this chapter. 4 September 1838" (*Rubish,* 1). The notes that are found in this jacket belong in large part to the final chapter of the book. In a partial copy from the *Rubish,* they are found precisely with the rough drafts of the fourth part (YTC, CVg, 2, p. 16 and following). Among these notes you find this one:

> Some ideas on the sentiment of equality (2 February 1836)./
>
> What must be understood by the sentiment of equality among democratic peoples./
>
> The taste for equality among most men is not: that no one be lower than I, but: that no one be higher than I, which, in practice, can come to the same thing, but which is far from meaning the same thing./
>
> So does a real and true taste for equality exist in this world? Among some elite souls. But you must not base your reasoning on them./
>
> What produced aristocracies? The desire among a few to raise themselves. What leads to democracy? The desire of all to raise themselves. The sentiment is the same; there is only a difference in the number of those who feel it. Each man aims as high as possible, and a level comes about naturally, without anyone wanting to be leveled.
>
> When everyone wants to rise at once, the rule of equality is quite naturally found to be what is most suitable for each man. A thousand runners all have the same goal. Each one burns with the desire of coming in first. For that, it would be good to precede the others in the course. But if I do that, who will assure me that the others will not do so? If there were only five or six who had to run with me, I could perhaps attempt it, but racing with a thousand, you cannot succeed in doing so. What to do? The only means is to prevent anyone from having any privilege and to leave each one to his natural resources. [v: All, however, agree to depart at the same time from the same place.] It is not that they truly love equality, but they are all obliged to resort to it./
>
> To reflect again about all of that (*Rubish,* 1). See note d for p. 1203.

c. First draft of this opening of the chapter:

> When conditions are more or less equal among men, each one, feeling independent of his fellows, contracts the habit and the need to follow only his will in his particular

You can imagine an extreme point where liberty and equality meet and merge.

Suppose that all citizens participate in the government and that each one has an equal right to take part in it.

Since no one then differs from his fellows, no one will be able to exercise a tyrannical power; men will be perfectly free, because they will all be entirely equal; and they will all be perfectly equal, because they will be entirely free. Democratic peoples tend toward this ideal.

That is the most complete form that equality can take on earth; but there are a thousand other forms that, without being as perfect, are scarcely less dear to these peoples.

Equality can become established in civil society and not reign in the political world. Everyone can have the right to pursue the same pleasures, to enter the same professions, to meet in the same places; in a word, to live in the same way and to pursue wealth by the same means, without all taking the same part in government.

A kind of equality can even become established in the political world, even if political liberty does not exist. Everyone is equal to all his fellows,

actions. This naturally leads the human mind to the idea of political liberty and suggests the taste for it.

Take one man at random from within a democratic people [v: in a country where equality reigns], put him if possible outside of his prejudices, of his interests of the moment, of his memories, so that he gives himself only to the sole interests that the social state suggests to him, and you will discover that among all governments the one that he most easily imagines first and that he loves best is government based on sovereignty of the people.

<So, as the social state of a people becomes democratic, you see the spirit of liberty born within it. These two things generally go together so closely that one makes me consider the other. The attempts that a nation makes to establish liberty within it only teach me that the principle of equality is developing there, and the equality that I see reigning among a people makes me suppose the approach of revolutions.>

So equality of conditions cannot be established among a people without the spirit of liberty being revealed there, and it is never entirely extinguished as long as equality of conditions remains.

Love of political liberty, however, is not the principal passion of these democratic peoples.

You can imagine an extreme point . . . (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 2–4).

except one, who is, without distinction, the master of all, and who takes the agents of his power equally from among all.

It would be easy to form several other hypotheses according to which a very great equality could easily be combined with institutions more or less free, or even with institutions that would not be free at all.

So although men cannot become absolutely equal without being entirely free, and consequently equality at its most extreme level merges with liberty, you are justified in distinguishing the one from the other.[d]

The taste that men have for liberty and the one that they feel for equality are, in fact, two distinct things, and I am not afraid to add that, among democratic peoples, they are two unequal things.

If you want to pay attention, you will see that in each century, a singular and dominant fact is found to which the other facts are related; this fact almost always gives birth to a generative thought, or to a principal passion that then ends by drawing to itself and carrying along in its course all sentiments and all ideas. It is like the great river toward which all of the surrounding streams seem to flow.

Liberty has shown itself to men in different times and in different forms; it has not been linked exclusively to one social state, and you find it elsewhere than in democracies. So it cannot form the distinctive characteristic of democratic centuries.

The particular and dominant fact that singles out these centuries is equality of conditions; the principal passion that agitates men in those times is love of this equality.

Do not ask what singular charm the men of democratic ages find in living equal; or the particular reasons that they can have to be so stubbornly attached to equality rather than to the other advantages that society presents to them. Equality forms the distinctive characteristic of the period in which they live; that alone is enough to explain why they prefer it to everything else.

d. "<Equality of conditions does not lead to liberty in an irresistible way, but it leads to it; this is our plank of salvation>" (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 6).

But, apart from this reason, there are several others that, in all times, will habitually lead men to prefer equality to liberty.

If a people could ever succeed in destroying by itself or only in decreasing the equality that reigns within it, it would do so only by long and difficult efforts. It would have to modify its social state, abolish its laws, replace its ideas, change its habits, alter its mores. But, to lose political liberty, it is enough not to hold on to it, and liberty escapes.

So men do not hold on to equality only because it is dear to them; they are also attached to it because they believe it must last forever.

You do not find men so limited and so superficial that they do not discover that political liberty may, by its excesses, compromise tranquillity, patrimony, and the life of individuals. But only attentive and clear-sighted men see the dangers with which equality threatens us, and ordinarily they avoid pointing these dangers out. They know that the miseries that they fear are remote, and they imagine that those miseries affect only the generations to come, about whom the present generation scarcely worries. The evils that liberty sometimes brings are immediate; they are visible to all, and more or less everyone feels them. The evils that extreme equality can produce appear only little by little; they gradually insinuate themselves into the social body; they are seen only now and then, and, at the moment when they become most violent, habit has already made it so that they are no longer felt.

The good things that liberty brings show themselves only over time, and it is always easy to fail to recognize the cause that gives them birth.

The advantages of equality make themselves felt immediately, and every day you see them flow from their source.

Political liberty, from time to time, gives sublime pleasures to a certain number of citizens.

Equality provides a multitude of small enjoyments to each man every day. The charms of equality are felt at every moment, and they are within reach of all; the most noble hearts are not insensitive to them, and they are the delight of the most common souls. So the passion to which equality gives birth has to be at the very same time forceful and general.

Men cannot enjoy political liberty without purchasing it at the cost of some sacrifices, and they never secure it except by a great deal of effort. But the pleasures provided by equality are there for the taking. Each one of the small incidents of private life seems to give birth to them, and to enjoy them, you only have to be alive.

Democratic peoples love equality at all times, but there are certain periods when they push the passion that they feel for it to the point of delirium. This happens at the moment when the old social hierarchy, threatened for a long time, is finally destroyed, after a final internal struggle, when the barriers that separated citizens are at last overturned. Men then rush toward equality as toward a conquest, and they cling to it as to a precious good that someone wants to take away from them. The passion for equality penetrates the human heart from all directions, it spreads and fills it entirely. Do not tell men that by giving themselves so blindly to one exclusive passion, they compromise their dearest interests; they are deaf. Do not show them that liberty is escaping from their hands while they are looking elsewhere; they are blind, or rather they see in the whole universe only one single good worthy of desire.

What precedes applies to all democratic nations. What follows concerns only ourselves.

Among most modern nations, and in particular among all the peoples of the continent of Europe, the taste and the idea of liberty only began to arise and to develop at the moment when conditions began to become equal, and as a consequence of this very equality. It was absolute kings who worked hardest to level ranks among their subjects. Among these peoples, equality preceded liberty; so equality was an ancient fact, when liberty was still something new; the one had already created opinions, customs, laws that were its own, when the other appeared alone, and for the first time, in full view. Thus, the second was still only in ideas and in tastes, while the first had already penetrated habits, had taken hold of mores, and had given a particular turn to the least actions of life. Why be surprised if men today prefer the one to the other?[e]

e. Not only are these two things different, but I can easily prove that they are some-

I think that democratic peoples have a natural taste for liberty; left to themselves, they seek it, they love it, and it is only with pain that they see themselves separated from it. But they have an ardent, insatiable, eternal, invincible passion for equality; they want equality in liberty, and if they cannot obtain that, they still want equality in slavery. They will suffer poverty, enslavement, barbarism, but they will not suffer aristocracy.

This is true in all times, and above all in our own. All men and all powers that would like to fight against this irresistible power will be overturned and destroyed by it.[f] In our day, liberty cannot be established without its support, and despotism itself cannot reign without it.

times opposed. It is clear for example that men must exercise political rights only to the extent that they are capable of doing so. Without that you would arrive at anarchy, which is only a particular form of tyranny. Now, it is certain that the sentiment of equality is less offended by the subjugation of all to one master, than by the submission of a great number to the government of a few. So the sentiment of equality leads here either to giving (illegible word) rights to everyone, which leads to anarchy, or to giving them to no one, which establishes despotism.

[To the side: "The despot is a distant enemy, the noble is an enemy who touches you."]

You can satisfy the taste of men for equality, without giving them liberty. Often they must even sacrifice a part of the second in order fully to enjoy the first.

So these two things are easily separable.

The very fact that they are not intimately united and that the one is infinitely more precious than the other would make it very easy and natural to neglect the second in order to run after the first./

So let us hold onto liberty with a desperate attachment, let us hold on to it as a good to which all other good things are attached.

[To the side] If, on the one hand, among a democratic people, men are more generally enlightened about their rights, on the other hand, it must be acknowledged that they are less able to defend them, because individually they are very weak and the art of acting in common is difficult and demands institutions that are not provided and an apprenticeship that is not allowed to be undertaken (YTC, CVd, pp. 24–25).

f. [On the jacket of a draft] Equality is not suitable for barbaric peoples; it prevents them from becoming enlightened and civilized./

Idea to introduce perhaps in the chapters on literature or the sciences.

[The beginning is missing (ed.)] and first, I do not believe that in all the ages of the life of peoples a democratic social state must produce the effects that I have just pointed out.

I have never thought that equality of conditions was suitable for the infancy of societies. When men are uncivilized as well as equal, each one of them feels too weak and too limited to look for enlightenment separately and it is almost impossible for all to try to find it at the same time by a common accord.

Nothing is so difficult to take as the first step out of barbarism. I do not doubt that more effort is required for a savage to discover the art of writing than for a civilized man to penetrate the general laws that regulate the world. Now it is not believable that men could ever conceive the need for such an effort without having it clearly shown to them, or that they would make such an effort without grasping the result in advance. In a society of barbarians equal to each other, since the attention of each man is equally absorbed by the first needs and the most coarse interests of life, the idea of intellectual progress can come to the mind of any one of them only with difficulty, and if by chance it is born, it would soon be as if suffocated amid the nearly instructive [instinctive? (ed.)] thoughts to which the poorly satisfied needs of the body always give birth. The savage lacks at the very same time the idea of study and the possibility of devoting himself to it.

I do not believe that history presents a single example of a democratic people who have risen gradually and by themselves toward enlightenment and that is easily understood. We have seen that among a nation where equality and barbarism reign at the same time it was very difficult for an individual to develop his intelligence separately. But if, exceptionally, he happens to do so, the superiority of his knowledge suddenly gives him such a great preponderance over all those who surround him that he does not take long to want to make use of it to put an end to equality to his advantage. So, if peoples {an emerging people} remain democratic, civilization cannot arise within them, and if civilization comes by chance to penetrate among them, they cease to be democratic. I am persuaded that humanity owes its enlightenment to such strokes of fortune, and I ≠{think that it is in losing their liberty that men acquired the means to reconquer it}≠ that it is under an aristocracy or under a prince that men still half-savage have gathered the various notions that later would allow them to live civilized, equal and free.

[In the margin: So I think that this same equality of conditions that seems to me very appropriate for precipitating the march of the human mind could prevent it from taking its first steps.]

If I admit that boldness of mind and the taste for general ideas are not necessarily found among peoples whose social state is democratic, I am equally far from claiming that you can hope to find them only there.

There are particular accidents that, among certain peoples, can give a particular impulse to the human mind. Among the accidents, I will put in the first rank the influence that some men exercise over the fate of societies. It seems that Providence, after tracing the various paths that nations can follow and fixing the final end of their

course, leaves to individuals the task of slowing or hurrying this march of humanity that they can neither divert nor halt.

Men are found here and there whose vigorous and unyielding minds scoff at the impediments that the social state and laws have formed, and whose minds enjoy pursuing their course even amid the obstacles that are strewn over it.

Such men rarely gain great sway over their fellow-citizens, but in the long run they exercise a powerful influence over their society and they draw the ideas of their descendants in their direction.

When political liberty . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 18–21).

CHAPTER 2[a]

Of Individualism in Democratic Countries

I have shown how, in centuries of equality, each man looked for his beliefs within himself; I want to show how, in these same centuries, he turns all his sentiments toward himself alone.

Individualism[b] is a recent expression given birth by a new idea. Our fathers knew only egoism.

a. 1. What individualism is; how it differs from egoism and ends by coming back to it.

2. Individualism is a sickness peculiar to the human heart in democratic times. Why?

1. Democracy makes you forget ancestors.

2. It hides descendants.

3. It separates contemporaries by destroying classes and by making them men independent of each other.

3. So in democratic centuries man is constantly brought back to himself alone and is preoccupied only with himself.

4. It is so above all at the outset of democratic centuries because of the jealousies and hatreds to which the democratic revolution has given birth (YTC, CVf, p. 23).

Tocqueville had thought about beginning the 1840 *Democracy* with this chapter (see note a for p. 697).

b. In the *rubish,* the chapter, which bears the title OF INDIVIDUALISM IN DEMOCRACIES AND OF THE MEANS THAT THE AMERICANS USE TO COMBAT IT, begins in this way: "I am not afraid to use new words when they are necessary to portray a new thing. Here the occasion to do so presents itself. Individualism is a recent expression . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

The word *individualism,* which seems to echo the *amour propre* (self-love) of Rousseau, was not invented by Tocqueville, but he is largely responsible for its definition and its usage. The word appears for the first time in this volume. James T. Schleifer dated its first use as 24 April 1837 (see note u for pp. 709–10). The novelty of the word must not

Egoism is a passionate and exaggerated love of oneself, which leads man to view everything only in terms of himself alone and to prefer himself to everything.[c]

Individualism is a considered and peaceful sentiment that disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the mass of his fellows and to withdraw to the side with his family and his friends; so that, after thus creating a small society for his own use, he willingly abandons the large society to itself.

Egoism is born out of blind instinct; individualism proceeds from an erroneous judgment rather than from a depraved sentiment. It has its source in failings of the mind as much as in vices of the heart.[d]

Egoism parches the seed of all virtues; individualism at first dries up only the source of public virtues, but, in the long run, it attacks and destroys all the others and is finally absorbed into egoism.

Egoism is a vice as old as the world. It hardly belongs more to one form of society than to another.

make us forget that Tocqueville several times used the expression *individual egoism* in a rather similar sense (as in note e of p. 511 in the second volume, and in p. 448, also in the second volume). During his 1835 voyage in England (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 60), Tocqueville also used another expression to designate almost the same idea. He spoke about the *spirit of exclusion,* a sentiment that "leads each man or each association of men to enjoy its advantages as much as possible by itself all alone, to withdraw as much as possible into its personality and not to allow whomever to see or to put a foot inside." The interesting concept of collective individualism appears only in *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (*OC,* II, 1, p. 158).

Some of Tocqueville's reading, the influence of Kergorlay (who knew Saint-Simonianism well), or the popularization of the word perhaps pushed Tocqueville afterward to use the word *individualism.* In his theory, the term is always accompanied by its opposite, the *spirit of individuality,* which Tocqueville defines in note 2 for p. 1179. Sometimes he also adopts the terms *individual strength, spirit of independence,* and *individual independence.*

Koenrad W. Swart ("Individualism in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, 1826–1860," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 23, 1962, pp. 77–86) points out that Tocqueville perhaps borrowed the term from Saint-Simon. For a discussion of the ideas of Tocqueville on individualism, see Jean-Claude Lamberti, *Tocqueville et les deux Démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983), pp. 217–40, and *La Notion d'individualisme chez Tocqueville* (Paris: PUF, 1970); see James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* pp. 252–57.

c. In the manuscript: "prefer himself to all others."

d. "≠Egoism, vice of the heart.

"Individualism, of the mind≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

Individualism is of democratic origin, and it threatens to develop as conditions become equal.

Among aristocratic peoples, families remain for centuries in the same condition, and often in the same place. That, so to speak, makes all generations contemporaries. A man almost always knows his ancestors and respects them; he believes he already sees his grandsons, and he loves them. He willingly assumes his duty toward both, and he often happens to sacrifice his personal enjoyments for these beings who are no more or who do not yet exist.

Aristocratic institutions have, moreover, the effect of tying each man closely to several of his fellow citizens.

Since classes are very distinct and unchanging within an aristocratic people, each class becomes for the one who is part of it a kind of small country, more visible and dearer than the large one.

Because, in aristocratic societies, all citizens are placed in fixed positions, some above others, each citizen always sees above him a man whose protection he needs, and below he finds another whose help he can claim.

So men who live in aristocratic centuries are almost always tied in a close way to something that is located outside of themselves, and they are often disposed to forget themselves. It is true that, in these same centuries, the general notion of *fellow* is obscure, and that you scarcely think to lay down your life for the cause of humanity; but you often sacrifice yourself for certain men.[e]

e. Aristocracy, which makes citizens depend on each other, leads them sometimes to great devotion, often to implacable hatreds. Democracy tends to make them indifferent to each other and disposes them to act as if they were alone.

Aristocracy forces man at every moment to go outside of himself in order to attend to others [v: interests other than his own], democracy constantly leads him back toward himself and threatens finally to enclose him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.

If democratic peoples abandon themselves immoderately to this tendency, it is easy to foresee that great evils will result for humanity.

[In the margin] Period of transition. Isolation much more complete. The hatreds of aristocracy and the indifference of democracy are combined. You isolate yourself by instinct and by will (*Rubish,* 1).

In democratic centuries, on the contrary, when the duties of each individual toward the species are much clearer, devotion toward one man [<or one class>] becomes more rare; the bond of human affections expands and relaxes.

Among democratic peoples, new families emerge constantly out of nothing, others constantly fall back into nothing, and all those that remain change face; the thread of time is broken at every moment, and the trace of the generations fades. You easily forget those who preceded you, and you have no idea about those who will follow you. Only those closest to you are of interest.

Since each class is coming closer to the others and is mingling with them, its members become indifferent and like strangers to each other. Aristocracy had made all citizens into a long chain that went from the peasant up to the king; democracy breaks the chain and sets each link apart.

As conditions become equal, a greater number of individuals will be found who, no longer rich enough or powerful enough to exercise a great influence over the fate of their fellows, have nonetheless acquired or preserved enough enlightenment and wealth to be able to be sufficient for themselves. The latter owe nothing to anyone, they expect nothing so to speak from anyone; they are always accustomed to consider themselves in isolation, and they readily imagine that their entire destiny is in their hands.

Thus, not only does democracy make each man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants from him and separates him from his contemporaries; it constantly leads him back toward himself alone and threatens finally to enclose him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.[*]

[*]. I believe that if I leave the piece that follows on the *period of transition,* it must simply be put there without making it a separate chapter.

CHAPTER 3

How Individualism Is Greater at the End of a Democratic Revolution than at Another Time[a]

It is above all at the moment when a democratic society finally takes form on the debris of an aristocracy, that this isolation of men from each other, and the egoism that follows are most easily seen.

These societies not only contain a great number of independent citizens, they are filled daily with men who, having reached independence only yesterday, are intoxicated with their new power; these men conceive a presumptuous confidence in their strength, and not imagining that from then on they might need to ask for the help of their fellows, they have no difficulty showing that they think only of themselves.

An aristocracy usually succumbs only after a prolonged struggle, during which implacable hatreds are kindled among the different classes. These passions survive victory, and you can follow their traces amid the democratic confusion that follows.[b]

Those among the citizens who were first in the destroyed hierarchy cannot immediately forget their former greatness; for a long time they consider themselves like strangers within the new society. They see in all the men made equal to them by this society, oppressors whose destiny cannot pro-

a. On the jacket of the manuscript: "Idea treated further on in the *political* chapters that end the book. Only after examining it in the two places will I be able to see if it must be deleted in one of the two or if it must only be expressed in a different way." This chapter, which is not found on the list of notebook CVf and does not exist in the *Rubish,* bears the number 20bis in the manuscript.

b. "Aristocracies have been seen that protected liberty. But every contested aristocracy becomes tyrannical. This is what is happening to the doctrinaires" (YTC, CVa, p. 1).

voke sympathy; they have lost sight of their former equals and no longer feel tied by a common interest to their fate; so each one, withdrawing apart, thinks he is reduced to being concerned only with himself. Those, on the contrary, who formerly were placed at the bottom of the social ladder, and who had been brought closer to the general level by a sudden revolution, enjoy only with a kind of secret uneasiness their newly acquired independence; if they find at their side a few of their former superiors, they look at them with triumph and fear, and move apart from them.

So it is usually at the beginning of democratic societies that citizens show themselves most disposed to separate themselves.

Democracy leads men not to draw nearer to their fellows; but democratic revolutions dispose them to flee each other and perpetuate within equality the hatreds given birth by inequality.

The great advantage of the Americans is to have arrived at democracy without having to suffer democratic revolutions, and to have been born equal instead of becoming so.[c]

c. Idea to bring very much forward.

[In the margin: Idea to show fully at the head or at the end of the book and also to present in outline in different parts.]

Effects of democracy and particularly harmful effects that are exaggerated in the period of revolution when the democratic social state, mores and laws become established.

Example: democracy has the end of making beliefs less stable, like fortunes and ranks. But at the moment when democracy comes to be established, a shaking of everything occurs that makes doubtful even the notion of good and evil, which is nonetheless the notion that men most easily understand.

That comes not only from {the state of} democracy, but also from the state of revolution. Produced by whatever cause, it will produce effects if not as great at least analogous. A revolution is an accident that temporarily makes all things unstable, and above all it has this effect when it (illegible word) to establish a permanent state whose tendency is in a way to establish instability. The great difficulty in the study of democracy is to distinguish what is democratic from what is only revolutionary. This is very difficult because examples are lacking. There is no European people among whom democracy has settled down, and America is in an exceptional situation. The state of literature in France is not only democratic, but revolutionary.

Public morality, id.

Religious opinions, id.

Political opinions, id. (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 51–53).

CHAPTER 4[a]

How the Americans Combat Individualism with Free Institutions[b]

Despotism, which, by its nature, is fearful, sees in the isolation of men the most certain guarantee of its own duration, and it ordinarily puts all its efforts into isolating them. There is no vice of the human heart that pleases it as much as egoism: a despot easily pardons the governed for not loving him, provided that they do not love each other.[c] He does not ask them to help him lead the State; it is enough that they do not claim to run it them-

a. 1. Despotism tends to isolate men constantly. So it is particularly dangerous in times when the social state has the same tendency.

2. Liberty is, on the contrary, particularly necessary in these times. Why:

1. By occupying citizens with public affairs, it draws them out of themselves.

2. By making them deal in common with their affairs, it makes them feel their reciprocal dependence.

3. By making the choice of magistrates depend on the public, it gives to all those who have some ambition the desire to serve their fellows in order to merit being their choice.

3. Example of all this drawn from the United States. How the Americans are not only content to combat individualism by creating national liberty, but have also established provincial liberties (YTC, CVf, pp. 23–24).

b. At one moment during the writing, this chapter had as a title: HOW THE AMERICANS COMBAT THE TENDENCIES THAT LEAD MEN TO SEPARATE THEMSELVES BY MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE SPIRIT OF ASSOCIATION (*Rubish,* 1).

"The defect of these chapters is that, in those that follow, I have already treated a part of the effects of individualism, without naming it" (*Rubish,* 1).

c. "The circulation of ideas is to civilization what the circulation of blood is to the human body" (*Rubish,* 1).

selves.[d] Those who claim to unite their efforts in order to create common prosperity, he calls unruly and restless spirits; and, changing the natural meaning of words, he calls good citizens those who withdraw narrowly into themselves.[e]

d. In the margin: "≠I have made known how, in democratic centuries, each man looked within himself alone for his *beliefs;* I want to show how in these same centuries he turns all his *sentiments* toward himself alone.≠"

e. You must take great notice of the social state of a people before deciding what political laws are suitable for them. When a nation adopts a government whose natural defects are unfortunately in accord with the natural defects of the social state, the nation must expect the latter to grow beyond measure.

Liberty, on the contrary, by creating great common affairs, tends constantly to draw citizens closer together, and it shows them every day in a practical way the tight bond that unites them. Among free peoples, it is the public that distributes honors and power, and it is only by working for the public that you succeed in gaining its favors. So it happens that among these peoples you think about your fellows out of ambition as much as out of disinterestedness, and often you in a way find your interest by forgetting about yourself.

The free institutions that certain peoples can if necessary do without, are therefore particularly necessary to men who are led by a secret instinct constantly to separate themselves from each other and to withdraw within the narrow limits of personal interest.

Despotism . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (*Rubish,* 1).

In the manuscript this other beginning can be read:

Equality of conditions not only disposes men to be interested only in themselves; it also leads them not to communicate with each other.

In aristocratic countries the members of the upper class get together from time to time for their pleasures, when they have no common affairs.

Among democratic peoples each man, having only a mediocre fortune that he oversees himself, does not have the leisure to seek out the company of his fellows. A great interest must force him to do so.

If the men of democratic countries were abandoned entirely to their natural instincts, they would end up not only by not making use of each other, but by not knowing one another. The circulation of sentiments and ideas would be as if suspended.

[In the margin: <This seems contestable to me for equality suggests a host of restless passions that must necessarily lead men to see each other a great deal even if they are indifferent./

This as well seems contrary to what I said previously that democratic periods were periods when all men came to resemble each other because they saw and heard each other constantly.>]

These are great dangers on which the attention of the legislator must be constantly fixed.

Thus, the vices given birth by despotism are precisely those that equality favors. The two things complement each other and help one another in a fatal way.

Equality places men side by side, without a common bond to hold them. Despotism raises barriers between them and separates them. It disposes them not to think about their fellows and makes indifference into a kind of public virtue.

So despotism, which is dangerous in all times, is to be particularly feared in democratic centuries.[f]

It is easy to see that in these same centuries men have a particular need for liberty.

When citizens are forced to occupy themselves with public affairs, they are necessarily drawn away from the middle of their individual interests and are, from time to time, dragged away from looking at themselves.

From the moment when common affairs are treated together, each man notices that he is not as independent of his fellows as he first imagined, and that, to gain their support, he must often lend them his help.

When the public governs, there is no man who does not feel the value of the public's regard and who does not seek to win it by gaining the esteem and affection of those among whom he must live.

Several of the passions that chill and divide hearts are then forced to withdraw deep into the soul and hide there. Pride conceals itself; scorn dares not to show itself. Egoism is afraid of itself. [You dread to offend and you love to serve.]

Under a free government, since most public functions are elective, the men who feel cramped in private life because of the loftiness of their souls or the restlessness of their desires, sense every day that they cannot do without the population that surrounds them.

It then happens that you think about your fellows out of ambition, and that often, in a way, you find it in your interest to forget yourself. [This

f. "Despotism would not only destroy liberty among these people, but in a way society" (*Rubish,* 1).

finally produces within democratic nations something analogous to what was seen in aristocracies.

In aristocratic countries men are bound tightly together by their very inequalities. In democratic countries where the various representatives of public power are elected, men attach themselves to each other by the exertion of their own will, and it is in this sense then that you can say that in those countries election replaces hierarchy to a certain degree.][g][h] I know that you can raise the objection here of all the intrigues given birth by an election, the shameful means that the candidates often use and the slanders that their enemies spread. Those are occasions of hatred, and they present themselves all the more often as elections become more frequent [≠which never fails to happen in proportion as municipal liberties develop≠].[j]

These evils are no doubt great, but they are temporary, while the good things that arise with them endure.

The desire to be elected can, for a short while, lead certain men to make war on each other; but this same desire leads all men in the long run to lend each other natural support; and, if it happens that an election accidentally divides two friends, the electoral system draws closer together in a permanent way a multitude of citizens who would always have remained strangers to each other. Liberty creates particular hatreds, but despotism gives birth to general indifference.

g. <If in my mind I wanted to portray with the aid of a physical image how men are connected to each other in aristocracies, I would imagine a chain all of whose links, of unequal shape and unequal thickness, would be passed [along (ed.)] equal spokes that would all end up attached together at the same center.

And if I wanted to understand how they can be connected to each other in democracies, I would imagine a multitude of equal spokes all ending up at the same center, so that, although all turn together, there would never be two of them that touch each other> (*Rubish,* 1).

h. In the margin: "Probably shorten this paragraph. The last sentence of the chapter is the same thing and better."

j. To the side: "<Perhaps this must be deleted, though good. This gives too much of a role to election in free institutions and perhaps in the mind of many readers damages my cause more than serving it.>"

The Americans fought, by means of liberty, against the individualism given birth by equality, and they defeated it.

The law-makers of America did not believe that to cure an illness so natural and so fatal to the social body in democratic times, it was sufficient to grant the nation a single way of representing itself as a whole; they thought, as well, that it was appropriate to give political life to each portion of the territory, in order infinitely to multiply for citizens the occasions to act together, and to make the citizens feel every day that they depend on each other.[k]

This was to behave with wisdom.

The general affairs of a country occupy only the principal citizens. The latter gather together in the same places only from time to time; and, as it often happens that afterward they lose sight of each other, no lasting bonds are established among them. But, when it is a matter of having the particular affairs of a district regulated by the men who live there, the same individuals are always in contact, and they are in a way forced to know each other and to please each other.

You draw a man out of himself with difficulty in order to interest him in the destiny of the entire State, because he poorly understands the influence that the destiny of the State can exercise on his fate. But if it is necessary to have a road pass by the end of his property, he will see at first glance that there is a connection between this small public affair and his greatest private affairs, and he will discover, without anyone showing him, the close bond that here unites particular interest to general interest.

So it is by charging citizens with the administration of small affairs, much more than by giving them the government of great ones, that you

k. So the great object of law-makers in democracies must be to create common *affairs* that *force* men to enter into contact with each other.

Laws that lead to this result are useful to all peoples; to democratic peoples they are necessary. Here they increase the well-being of society; there they make society continue to exist, for what is society for thinking beings, if not the communication and connection of minds and hearts?/

That should lead me easily to free institutions that give birth to common *affairs* (*Rubish,* 1).

interest them in the public good and make them see the need that they constantly have for each other in order to produce that good.

You can, by a dazzling action, suddenly capture the favor of a people; but, to win the love and respect of the population that surrounds you, there must be a long succession of small services provided, humble good offices, a constant habit of benevolence and a well-established reputation of disinterestedness.

So local liberties, which make a great number of citizens put value on the affection of their neighbors and of those nearby, constantly bring men back toward each other despite the instincts that separate them, and force them to help each other.

In the United States, the most opulent citizens are very careful not to isolate themselves from the people; on the contrary, they constantly draw closer to them, they readily listen to them and speak with them every day. They know that in democracies the rich always need the poor and that, in democratic times, the poor are attached by manners more than by benefits. The very grandeur of these benefits, which brings out the difference of conditions, causes a secret irritation to those who profit from them; but simplicity of manners has nearly irresistible charms; familiarity of manners seduces and even their coarseness does not always displease.

This truth does not at first sight penetrate the mind of the rich. Usually, they resist it as long as the democratic revolution lasts, and they do not even admit it immediately after the revolution is accomplished. They willingly agree to do good for the people; but they want to continue to hold them carefully at a distance. They believe that is enough; they are wrong. They would ruin themselves in this way without rekindling the heart of the population that surrounds them. It is not the sacrifice of their money that is demanded of them; it is the sacrifice of their pride.[m]

You would say that in the United States there is no imagination that does not exhaust itself inventing means to increase wealth and to satisfy the needs of the public. The most enlightened inhabitants of each district are constantly using their knowledge to discover new secrets appropriate for

m. This paragraph and the preceding one are not found in the manuscript.

increasing common prosperity; and, when they have found some, they hasten to give them to the crowd.[n]

While closely examining the vices and weaknesses often shown by those who govern in America, you are astonished by the growing prosperity of the people, and you are mistaken.[o] It is not the elected magistrate who makes the American democracy prosper; but it prospers because the magistrate is elective.[p]

It would be unjust to believe that the patriotism of the Americans and the zeal that each of them shows for the well-being of his fellow citizens has nothing real about it. Although private interest directs most human actions in the United States as well as elsewhere, it does not determine all of them.

I must say that I have often seen Americans make great and true sacrifices for public affairs, and I have observed a hundred times that they hardly ever fail to lend faithful support to each other as needed.

The free institutions that the inhabitants of the United States possess, and the political rights that they use so much, recall constantly, and in a thousand ways, to each citizen that he lives in society. They lead his mind at every moment toward this idea, that the duty as well as the interest of men is to make themselves useful to their fellows; and, as he sees no particular cause to hate them, since he is never either their slave or their master, his heart inclines easily in the direction of benevolence. You first get involved in the general interest by necessity, and then by choice; what was calculation becomes instinct; and by working for the good of your fellow citizens, you finally acquire the habit and taste of serving them.

[When men, unequal to each other, put all their political powers in the hands of one man, that is not enough for them to become indifferent and cold toward each other, because they continue to need each other constantly in civil life.

But when equal men do not take part in government, they almost en-

n. In the margin, in pencil: "Not only, but. Ampère."

o. "≠It is not those who are elected to public offices who make democracies prosper, but those who want to be≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

p. In the margin, in pencil: "A connection is desired here. Ampère."

tirely lack the occasion to harm each other or to make use of each other. Each one forgets his fellows to think only of the prince and himself.

So political liberty, which is useful when conditions are unequal, becomes necessary in proportion as they become equal.][q]

Many people in France consider equality of conditions as a first evil, and political liberty as a second. When they are forced to submit to the one, they try hard at least to escape the other. As for me, I say that, to combat the evils that equality can produce, there is only one effective remedy: political liberty.

q. "When the government [v: sources of power] is found in the population itself and not above it, you feel for the people something of the good and bad sentiments that kings inspire in absolute monarchies; you fear him, you adulate him, and often you love him passionately. Base souls take him as the object of their flattery and lofty ones as the focus of their devotion" (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 5[a]

Of the Use That Americans Make of Association in Civil Life[b]

I do not want to talk about those political associations by the aid of which men seek to defend themselves against the despotic action of a majority or against the encroachments of royal power. I have already treated this subject elsewhere. It is clear that, if each citizen, as he becomes individually weaker and therefore more incapable of preserving his liberty by himself alone, did not learn the art of uniting with his fellows to defend his liberty, tyranny

a. 1. Here it is not a matter of political associations. I treated this subject in the first work.

2. The Americans are at the very same time the most *democratic* people and the ones who have made the most use of *association.* These two things go together, in fact.

1. In aristocratic countries there are permanent and established associations, composed of a few powerful men and of all those who depend on them.

2. In democratic countries, where all citizens are equal and weak, temporary and voluntary associations must be formed, or civilization is in danger.

3. Not only are industrial associations necessary, but moral and intellectual associations. Why:

1. In order for sentiments and ideas to be renewed and for the human mind to develop, men must act constantly upon each other.

2. Now, in democratic countries, only the government naturally has this power of action. And it exercises it always incompletely and tyrannically.

3. So there associations must come to replace the powerful individuals who in aristocracies take charge of bringing sentiments and ideas to light.

4. *Summary.* In order for men to remain civilized or to become so, the art of association among them must be developed and perfected in the same proportion as equality (illegible word) (YTC, CVf, pp. 24–25).

b. "≠Remark of Édouard: chapter weakly written≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

would necessarily grow with equality.[c] Here it is a matter only of the associations that are formed in civil life and whose aim has nothing political about it.

The political associations that exist in the United States form only a detail amid the immense tableau that associations as a whole present there.

Americans of all ages, of all conditions, of all minds, constantly unite. Not only do they have commercial and industrial associations in which they all take part, but also they have a thousand other kinds: religious, moral, [intellectual,] serious ones, useless ones, very general and very particular ones, immense and very small ones;[d] Americans associate to celebrate holidays, establish seminaries, build inns, erect churches, distribute books, send missionaries to the Antipodes; in this way they create hospitals, prisons, schools. If, finally, it is a matter of bringing a truth to light or of developing a sentiment with the support of a good example, they associate. Wherever, at the head of a new undertaking, you see in France the government, and in England, a great lord, count on seeing in the United States, an association.

c. A great publicist of today has said:

It is not by exterminating the civilized men of the IVth century that the barbarians managed to destroy the civilization of that time. It was enough for them to come between them so to speak and by separating them to make them like strangers to one another.

[To the side: To finish associations there, to turn G[uizot (ed.)] against himself.]

It is by a similar path that the men of today could well return to barbarism, if they were not careful.

[In another place] M. G[uizot (ed.)]. wants to speak about the prevention of *communicating* with rather than about the impossibility of *acting* on each other. These ideas are close but different. In order to *act* on each other, they must first *communicate* with each other. But you can communicate without acting. This is the case of men in democratic countries.

[To the side: If a government forbid citizens to associate or undertook to take away their taste for doing so, it would behave precisely as the barbarians./

to communicate-----newspaper

to act-----association.] (*Rubish,* 1). See note a of p. 18 of the first volume.

d. "A thousand types of associations in America. Harmony. C. B. 2. Shaking quakers" (*Rubish,* 1 and YTC, CVa, p. 4).

I found in America some kinds of associations[e] of which, I confess, I had not even the idea, and I often admired the infinite art with which the inhabitants of the United States succeeded in setting a common goal for the efforts of a great number of men, and in making them march freely toward it.

I have since traveled across England, from where the Americans took some of their laws and many of their customs, and it seemed to me that there one was very far from making such constant and skillful use of association.

It often happens that the English individually carry out very great things, while there is scarcely so small an enterprise for which the Americans do not unite. It is clear that the first consider association as a powerful means of action; but the second seem to see it as the only means they have to act.

Thus the most democratic country on earth is, out of all, the one where men today have most perfected the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires and have applied this new science to the greatest number of things.[f] Does this result from an accident, or could it be that in fact a necessary connection exists between associations and equality?

e. "Three great categories of associations:
"Industrial associations.
"Religious associations. Moral associations: Intellectual."

[In another place] *"Legal* associations, *voluntary* associations: Artificial.

"The government, in some fashion, can well take the place of legal associations, but not of voluntary associations. All of that moreover goes together; *legal* associations teach men about voluntary associations and the latter about legal associations./

"Among voluntary associations also distinguish *political* and *civil* associations" (*Rubish,* 1).

f. Means to take to facilitate the spirit of association.

1. Make the will to associate very easy to carry out.

2. Do yourself only what associations can absolutely not carry out. If, on the contrary, the government marches in the direction of the social state, individualism has no limit. This requires that many nuances be pointed out. For if democratic peoples need more than others to be allowed to do things by themselves, they also sometimes have a greater need than others to have things done for them.

[In the margin: Marvels that democracy can accomplish with the aid of the spirit of association. See the railroads in America. *Revue des deux mondes* (1836).]

Aristocratic societies always contain within them, amid a multitude of individuals who can do nothing by themselves, a small number of very powerful and very rich citizens; each of the latter can by himself carry out great enterprises.

In aristocratic societies, men do not need to unite in order to act, because they are held tightly together.

There, each citizen, rich and powerful, is like the head of a permanent and compulsory association that is composed of all those who are dependent on him and who are made to cooperate in the execution of his plans.

Among democratic peoples, on the contrary, all citizens are independent and weak; they can hardly do anything by themselves, and no one among them can compel his fellows to lend him their help. So they all fall into impotence if they do not learn to help each other freely.[g]

If men who live in democratic countries had neither the right nor the taste to unite for political ends, their independence would run great risks, but they could for a long time retain their wealth and their enlightenment; while, if they did not acquire the custom of associating in ordinary life, civilization itself would be in danger.[h] A people among whom individuals

3. Give enlightenment, spread liberty and allow men to solve things by themselves. Comparison with the child that you make walk not in order to have the right to be kept always in leading-strings, but on the contrary to make him able to run all alone someday. But it is not in this way that governments understand it. They treat their subjects more or less as women are treated in China. They force them to wear the shoes of infancy all their lives (*Rubish,* 1).

It is possible that Tocqueville is referring here to the article of Michel Chevalier, "Des chemins de fer comparés aux lignes navigables" (*Revue des deux mondes,* 4th series, 1838, pp. 789–813).

g. "In aristocratic countries, enterprises larger and associations smaller.
"In democratic countries, enterprises smaller and associations larger" (*Rubish,* 1).

h. Civil associations./
[In the margin: Necessary remedy for egoism, more intelligent but more indispensable [and (ed.)] not less natural than sociability.]
Political associations are necessary in democracies as the executive power there is weaker. Without that, the majority is tyrannical.

lost the power to do great things separately without acquiring the ability to achieve them together would soon return to barbarism.

Unfortunately, the same social state that makes associations so necessary to democratic peoples makes them more difficult for them than for all other peoples.

When several members of an aristocracy want to associate, they easily succeed in doing so. As each one of them has great strength in society, the number of members of the association can be very small, and, when the numbers are few, it is very easy for them to know and understand each other and to establish fixed rules.

The same facility is not found among democratic nations, where those in the association must always be very numerous so that the association has some power.

[The liberty to associate is, therefore, more precious and the science of association more necessary among those peoples than among all others and <it becomes more precious and more necessary as equality is greater.>]

I know that there are many of my contemporaries who are not hindered by this. They claim that as citizens become weaker and more incapable, the government must be made more skillful and more active, in order for society to carry out what individuals are no longer able to do. They believe they have answered everything by saying that. But I think they are mistaken.

A government could take the place of a few of the largest American associations, and within the Union several particular states have already

Civil associations are useful in aristocratic countries; they are so necessary in democracies that it may be believed that a democratic people among whom civil associations could not form or could form with difficulty would have difficulty not falling into barbarism.

So the legislator in democracies must work hard to favor and to facilitate in all ways the developments of the right of association.

Unfortunately it is a chimera to believe that civil association can undergo great development where political association cannot exist (*Rubish,* 1).

tried to do so. But what political power would ever be able to be sufficient for the innumerable multitude of small enterprises that the American citizens carry out every day with the aid of the association?[j]

It is easy to foresee that the time is coming when man will be less and less able to produce by himself alone the things most common and most necessary to his life.[k] So the task of the social power will grow constantly, and its very efforts will make it greater every day. The more it puts itself in the place of associations, the more individuals, losing the idea of associating, will need it to come to their aid. These are causes and effects that engender each other without stopping. Will the public administration end up directing all the industries for which an isolated citizen cannot suffice?[m] And if a moment finally arrives when, as a consequence of the extreme division of landed property, the land is infinitely divided, so that it can no longer be cultivated except by associations of farm workers, will the head of government have to leave the tiller of the State in order to come to hold the plow?

The morals and intelligence of a democratic people would run no lesser dangers than their trade and industry, if the government came to take the place of associations everywhere.[n]

Sentiments and ideas are renewed, the heart grows larger and the human mind develops only by the reciprocal action of men on each other.

I have demonstrated that this action is almost nil in democratic countries. So it must be created there artificially. And this is what associations alone are able to do.

When the members of an aristocracy adopt a new idea or conceive of a

j. "If these things are no longer done by anyone, the people gradually return to barbarism, and if you charge the great general association, which is called the government, with them, tyranny is inevitable" (*Rubish,* 1).

k. "It is easy to foresee that the day is approaching when men will be forced to associate in order to carry out a portion of the things most necessary to life. *Fourierism"* (*Rubish,* 1).

m. "Commercial associations are the easiest and the first; they are the ones that a government has the most interest in encouraging" (*Rubish,* 1).

n. "In this, as in nearly everything else, the greatest effort of the government must tend toward teaching citizens the art of doing without its help" (*Rubish,* 1).

new sentiment, they place them, in a way, next to them on the great stage where they are themselves, and, in this way exposing those new ideas or sentiments to the sight of the crowd, they introduce them easily into the mind or heart of those who surround them.

In democratic countries only the social power is naturally able to act in this way, but it is easy to see that its action is always insufficient and often dangerous.[o]

A government can no more suffice for maintaining alone and for renewing the circulation of sentiments and ideas among a great people than for conducting all of the industrial enterprises. From the moment it tries to emerge from the political sphere in order to throw itself into the new path, it will exercise an unbearable tyranny, even without wanting to do so; for government only knows how to dictate precise rules; it imposes the sentiments and ideas that it favors, and it is always difficult to distinguish its counsels from its orders.[p]

It will be still worse if a government believes itself really interested in having nothing move. It will then keep itself immobile and allow itself to become heavy with a voluntary sleep.

So it is necessary that it does not act alone.

Associations, among democratic peoples, must take the place of the powerful individuals that equality of conditions has made disappear.

As soon as some inhabitants of the United States have conceived of a sentiment or an idea that they want to bring about in the world, they seek each other out, and when they have found each other, they unite. From that moment, they are no longer isolated men, but a power that is seen from afar, and whose actions serve as an example; a power that speaks and to which you listen.

The first time I heard in the United States that one hundred thousand men[*] had publicly pledged not to use strong liquor, the thing seemed to

o. "The dominion of the majority is absolute, but it would be too permanent if there were not associations to combat it and to drag it out of its old ways" (*Rubish,* 1).

p. The manuscript says: ". . . to distinguish in it the *teacher from the master."*

[*]. There are more than that. Look for the figure in the *Penitentiary System.*

me more amusing[q] than serious, and I did not at first see clearly why these citizens, who were so temperate, would not be content to drink water within their families.

I ended by understanding that these hundred thousand Americans, frightened by the progress that drunkenness was making around them, had wanted to give their patronage to temperance. They had acted precisely like a great lord who dressed very plainly in order to inspire disdain for luxury among simple citizens. It may be believed that if these hundred thousand men[r] lived in France, each one of them would have individually addressed the government in order to beg it to oversee the taverns throughout the entire kingdom.

There is nothing, in my opinion, that merits our attention more than the intellectual and moral associations of America. The political and industrial associations of the Americans easily fall within our grasp, but the others escape us; and, if we discover them, we understand them badly, because we have hardly ever seen anything analogous. You must recognize, however, that the intellectual and moral associations are as necessary as the political and industrial ones to the American people, and perhaps more.

In democratic countries, the science of association is the mother science; the progress of all the others depends on the progress of the former.[s]

Among the laws that govern human societies, there is one that seems more definitive and clearer than all the others. For men to remain civilized or to become so, the art of associating must become developed among them and be perfected in the same proportion as equality of conditions grows.

q. The manuscript says: "ridiculous."

r. The manuscript cites: "three hundred thousand."

s. "So I am far from claiming that a democratic government must abandon all important enterprises to the industry of individuals, or even that there is not a certain period in the life of a democratic people when the government must more or less mingle in a great number of enterprises, but I do not believe that in that [interrupted text (ed.)]" (*Rubish,* 1).

[Of the Manner in Which American Governments Act toward Associations][t]

[In England, the State mingles strictly only in its own affairs. Often it even relies on individuals for the task of undertaking and of completing works whose usefulness or grandeur has an almost national appearance.

The English think they have done enough for the citizens by allowing them to give themselves unreservedly to their industry, or by allowing them to associate freely if they need to do so.

The Americans go further: it often happens that they lend to certain associations the support of the State or even charge the State with taking their place.

≠There are works that do not precisely have a national character, but whose execution is very difficult, in which the government takes part in the United States, or that it carries out at its expense. Such a thing is hardly seen in England.≠

That is explained when you consider that, if associations are more necessary in a democratic country, they are at the same time more difficult.

Among an aristocratic people, an association can have very great power and be composed of only a few men. In democratic countries, in order to create a similar association, you must unite a multitude of citizens all with-

t. Short unpublished chapter that is found with the manuscript of the chapter:

This chapter contains some good ideas and some good sentences. Nonetheless, I believe it useful to delete it.

1. Because it treats very briefly and very incompletely a very interesting subject that has been treated at great length by others. Among others, Chevalier.

2. Because it gets into the order of ideas of the great political chapters of the end./

Consult L[ouis (ed.)]. and B[eaumont (ed.)]./

It is clear in any case that this chapter is too thin to go alone. It must be deleted or joined to another. Perhaps to the general chapter on associations.

Tocqueville is alluding to Michel Chevalier, author of *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord,* 1836.

out defenses, keep them together and lead them. So in aristocratic countries the State can rely on individuals and associations for everything. In democratic countries it cannot do the same.

Those who govern democratic societies are in a very difficult position. If they always want to take the place of great associations, they prevent the spirit of association from developing and they take on a burden that weighs them down; and if they rely only on associations, very useful and often necessary things are not done by anyone.

Men who live in democratic centuries have more need than others to be allowed to do things by themselves, and more than others, they sometimes need things to be done for them. That depends on circumstances.

The greatest art of government in democratic countries consists in clearly distinguishing the circumstances and acting according to how circumstances lead it.

I will say only in a general way that since the first interest of a people of this type is that the spirit of association spreads and becomes secure within it, all the other interests must be subordinated to that one.

So the government [v. social power], even when it lends its support to individuals, must never discharge them entirely from the trouble of helping themselves by uniting; often it must deny them its help in order to let them find the secret of being self-sufficient, and it must withdraw its hand as they better understand the art of doing so.

This is, moreover, not particular to the subject of associations or to democratic times.

The principal aim of good government has always been to make the citizens more and more able to do without its *help.* That is more useful than the help can be.

If men learn in *obedience* only the art of obeying and not that of being free, I do not know what privileges they will have over the animals except that the shepherd would be taken from among them.][u]

u. In the margin: "There is the kernel of the thought. There is no correlation between *help* and *obedience.* You can lend help to a man that you do not command."

CHAPTER 6[a]

Of the Relation between Associations and Newspapers[b]

a. 1. When men are independent of one another you can only make a large number of them act in common by persuading each one separately but simultaneously of the utility of the enterprise.

And only a newspaper can thus succeed in putting the same thought in a thousand ears at the same time.

So newspapers are necessary in proportion as conditions are more equal.

2. A newspaper not only suggests the same plan to a large number of men at the same time, it provides them the means to carry out in common the plans that they had conceived themselves.

1. First, it makes them know each other and it puts them in contact.

2. Then, it binds them together; it makes them talk with each other without seeing each other and march in agreement without gathering together.

3. Since newspapers increase with associations, it is easy to understand that the less centralization there is among a people, the more newspapers there must be. For each district then forms a permanent association in which the need for a newspaper makes itself felt much more than when there is only a large national association.

4. Since a newspaper always represents an association, it explains why, the greater equality is and the weaker each individual is, the stronger the press is. The newspaper overpowers each of its readers in the name of all the others (YTC, CVf, pp. 26–27).

b. The *Rubish* contains two jackets with notes and drafts for this chapter. One bears the same title as the chapter; the other bears the following title:

PARTICULAR UTILITY THAT DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES DRAW FROM LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND IN PARTICULAR FROM NEWSPAPERS./

Chapter scarcely roughed out and *weakly* conceived, to review and perhaps to delete. To put in the middle of associations./

Édouard notes rightly: 1. that the subject of newspapers is of all democratic subjects the one most familiar to the French, that consequently I must hesitate to treat it. 2. that in any case it is too important to treat it accidentally in relation to associations.

When men are no longer bound together in a solid and permanent way, you cannot get a large number to act in common, unless by persuading each one whose help is needed that his particular interest obliges him to unite his efforts voluntarily with the efforts of all the others.

That can usually and conveniently be done only with the aid of a newspaper;[c] only a newspaper can succeed in putting the same thought in a thousand minds at the same instant.

A newspaper is an advisor that you do not need to go to find, but which appears by itself and speaks to you daily and briefly about common affairs, without disturbing you in your private affairs.

So newspapers become more necessary as men are more equal and individualism more to be feared. It would diminish their importance to believe that they serve only to guarantee liberty; they maintain civilization.

I will not deny that, in democratic countries, newspapers often lead cit-

He proposes that I only show the relation that exists between newspapers and associations. A newspaper is the voice of an association. You can consider it as the soul of the association, the most energetic means that the association uses to form itself. If, on the one hand, there is a connection between the number of associations and equality of conditions, there is a connection between the number of newspapers and that of associations.

An association that has only one newspaper to read is only rough-hewn, but it already exists.

To that I propose to join what I say about how the power of newspapers grows in proportion as conditions become equal./

Associations in democracies can form only from a multitude of weak and humble individuals who do not see each other from far away, who do not have the leisure to seek each other out, or the ability to consult and to agree with each other (in aristocracies, on the contrary, a powerful association can form from a small number of powerful citizens; the latter know each other and they do not need newspapers to consult and to agree with each other). All of these things can take place only because of *newspapers* and in general because of the free publications of the press. So newspapers are necessary in democracies in proportion as associations themselves are necessary (*the central idea is found!*) (*Rubish,* 1).

c. "Make a note to point out that it is a matter here not only of political newspapers, but also and above all of scientific, industrial, religious, moral newspapers . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

izens to do in common very ill-considered undertakings; but if there were no newspapers, there would be hardly any common action. So the evil that they produce is much less than the one they cure.

A newspaper not only has the effect of suggesting the same plan to a large number of men; it provides them with the means to carry out in common the plans that they would have conceived by themselves.

The principal citizens who inhabit an aristocratic country see each other from far away; and, if they want to combine their strength, they march toward each other, dragging along a multitude in their wake.

It often happens, on the contrary, in democratic countries, that a large number of men who have the desire or the need to associate cannot do so; since all are very small and lost in the crowd, they do not see each other and do not know where to find each other. Along comes a newspaper that exposes to view the sentiment or the idea that came simultaneously, but separately, to each of them. All head immediately for this light, and these wandering spirits, who have been looking for each other for a long time in the shadows, finally meet and unite.

[<In aristocratic countries you group readily around one man, and in democratic countries around a newspaper, and it is in this sense that you can say that newspapers there take the place of great lords.>]

The newspaper has drawn them closer together, and they continue to need it to hold them together.

For an association among a democratic people to have some power it must be numerous. Those who compose it are thus spread over a large area, and each of them is kept in the place that he inhabits by the mediocrity of his fortune and by the multitude of small cares that it requires. They must find a means to talk together every day without seeing each other, and to march in accord without getting together. Thus there is hardly any democratic association that can do without a newspaper.[d]

d. "That also explains the power of newspapers in democracies. They are not naturally stronger than in aristocracies, but they speak amid the universal silence; they act amid the common powerlessness. They take the initiative when no one dares to take it." (*Rubish* PARTICULAR UTILITY THAT DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES DRAW FROM LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND IN PARTICULAR FROM NEWSPAPERS, *Rubish,* 1).

So a necessary relation exists between associations and newspapers; newspapers make associations, and associations make newspapers; and if it was true to say that associations must multiply as conditions become equal, it is no less certain that the number of newspapers grows as associations multiply.[e]

Consequently America is the only country in the world where at the same time you find the most associations and the most newspapers.

This relationship between the number of newspapers and that of associations leads us to discover another one between the condition of the periodical press and the administrative form of the country, and we learn that the number of newspapers must decrease or increase among a democratic people in proportion as administrative centralization is more or less great. For among democratic peoples, you cannot entrust the exercise of local powers to the principal citizens as in aristocracies. These powers must be abolished, or their use handed over to a very great number of men. These men form a true association established in a permanent manner by the law for the administration of one portion of the territory, and they need a newspaper to come to find them each day amid their small affairs, and to teach them the state of public affairs. The more numerous the local powers are, the greater is the number of those called by the law to exercise them; and the more this necessity makes itself felt at every moment, the more newspapers proliferate.

It is the extraordinary splitting up of administrative power, much more than great political liberty and the absolute independence of the press, that so singularly multiplies the number of newspapers in America. If all the inhabitants of the Union were voters under the rule of a system that limited their electoral right to the choice of the legislators of the State, they would need only a small number of newspapers, because they could have only a few very important, but very rare occasions to act together; but within the great national association, the law established in each province and in each city, and so to speak in each village, small associations

e. "Thus the number of newspapers grows not only according to the number of voluntary associations; it also increases in proportion as the political power [v: administration] becomes decentralized and as the local power passes from the hands of the few into those of all" (*Rubish,* 1).

with the purpose of local administration. The law-maker in this way forced each American to cooperate daily with some of his fellow citizens in a common work, and each of them needs a newspaper to teach him what the others are doing.

I think that a democratic people,[1] who would not have national representation, but a great number of small local powers, would end by having more newspapers than another people among whom a centralized administration would exist alongside an elected legislature. What best explains to me the prodigious development that the daily press has undergone in the United States, is that I see among the Americans the greatest national liberty combined with local liberties of all types.

It is generally believed in France and in England that it is enough to abolish the duties that burden the press in order to increase newspapers indefinitely. That greatly exaggerates the effects of such a reform. Newspapers multiply not only following low cost, but also following the more or less repeated need that a large number of men have to communicate together and to act in common.

I would equally attribute the growing power of newspapers to more general reasons than those that are often used to explain it.

A newspaper can continue to exist only on the condition of reproducing a common doctrine or common sentiment for a large number of men. So a newspaper always represents an association whose members are its habitual readers.

This association can be more or less defined, more or less limited, more or less numerous; but it exists in minds, at least in germ; for that reason alone the newspaper does not die.

This leads us to a final reflection that will end this chapter.

The more conditions become equal, the weaker men are individually,

1. *I say a* democratic people. *The administration can be very decentralized among an aristocratic people, without making the need for newspapers felt, because local powers then are in the hands of a very small number of men who act separately or who know each other and can easily see and understand each other.*

the more they allow themselves to go along easily with the current of the crowd and the more difficulty they have holding on alone to an opinion that the crowd abandons.

The newspaper represents the association; you can say that it speaks to each one of its readers in the name of all the others, and the weaker they are individually, the more easily it carries them along.[f]

So the dominion of newspapers must grow as men become more equal.

f. "The press that much more powerful among a democratic people as the spirit of association is less widespread. It is not that it is itself stronger, but that those whom it wants to dominate are weaker" (*Rubish* PARTICULAR UTILITY THAT DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES DRAW FROM LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND IN PARTICULAR FROM NEWSPAPERS, *Rubish,* I).

CHAPTER 7[a]

Relations between Civil Associations and Political Associations[b]

a. 1. When men have contracted the habit of associations in civil life, that gives them great facility for associating in political life.

2. Political associations are on their side very powerful for giving men the thought and the art of associating in civil life.

1. Politics provides common interests to a multitude of men at the same time, provides them with natural occasions to associate, which generalizes the theory of association and makes it studied.

2. You can in general become familiar with the theory of association only by risking your money. Associations are the free schools of association.

3. So political associations neutralize in the long run most of the evils that they create. For if they put the tranquillity of the State at risk, they multiply the number of civil associations that favor this tranquillity (YTC, CVf, p. 27).

b. ≠This chapter absolutely needs a general reworking. Its movement is confused and difficult, and several of the ideas that it contains are questionable.≠/

You would say that I come to prove that civil association arises from political association, which is false according to myself, since I say that in countries where political association is *forbidden,* civil association is *rare.*

1. *The first aim* of the chapter is to show that civil association is always weak, lethargic, limited, clumsy wherever political association does not exist. Civil association does not arise from political association any more than the latter from civil association. They develop mutually. In a country where political associations are very numerous, civil associations cannot fail to be so as well, just as men who already have the habit of associating in civil matters have a great facility for associating in politics.

2. *The second objective of the chapter* is to show that a people can have an interest in allowing liberty of political association in order to favor civil association, which is more necessary to its tranquillity than the other is harmful./

There are *free* associations other than *political* associations, but they are not striking.

You can undoubtedly study the laws of association in the *Norman association,* but who thinks of doing so? (*Rubish,* 1).

There is only one nation[c] on earth where the unlimited liberty of associating for political ends is used daily. This same nation is the only one in the world where the citizens have imagined making continual use of the right of association in civil life and have succeeded in gaining in this way all the good things civilization can offer.

Among all peoples where political association is forbidden, civil association is rare.

It is hardly probable that this is a result of an accident; but you must instead conclude from it that there exists a natural and perhaps necessary relationship between the two types of associations.

[≠Men can associate in a thousand ways, but the spirit of association is a whole, and you cannot stop one of its principal developments without weakening it everywhere else.≠]

Some men have by chance a common interest in a certain affair. It concerns a commercial enterprise to direct, an industrial operation to conclude; they meet together and unite; in this way they become familiar little by little with association [and when it becomes necessary to associate for a political end, they feel more inclined to attempt it and more capable of succeeding in doing so.]

The more the number of these small common affairs increases, the more men acquire, even without their knowing, the ability to pursue great affairs together.

Civil associations therefore facilitate political associations; but, on the other hand, political association develops and singularly perfects civil association.

In civil life, each man can, if need be, believe that he is able to be self-sufficient. In politics, he can never imagine it. So when a people has a public life, the idea of association and the desire to associate present themselves each day to the mind of all citizens; whatever natural reluctance men have to act in common, they will always be ready to do so in the interest of a party.

Thus politics generalizes the taste and habit of association; it brings

c. In a first version: ". . . there are only two nations."

about the desire to unite and teaches the art of associating to a host of men who would have always lived alone.

Politics not only gives birth to many associations, it creates very vast associations.

In civil life it is rare for the same interest to attract naturally a large number of men toward a common action. Only with a great deal of art can you succeed in creating something like it.

In politics, the occasion presents itself at every moment. Now, it is only in great associations that the general value of association appears. Citizens individually weak do not form in advance a clear idea of the strength that they can gain by uniting; you must show it to them in order for them to understand it. The result is that it is often easier to gather a multitude for a common purpose than a few men; a thousand citizens do not see the interest that they have in uniting; ten thousand see it. In politics, men unite for great enterprises, and the advantage that they gain from association in important affairs teaches them, in a practical way, the interest that they have in helping each other in the least affairs.

A political association draws a multitude of individuals out of themselves at the same time; however separated they are naturally by age, mind, fortune, it brings them closer together and puts them in contact. They meet once and learn how to find each other always.

You can become engaged in most civil associations only by risking a portion of your patrimony; it is so for all industrial and commercial companies. When men are still little versed in the art of associating and are ignorant of its principal rules, they fear, while associating for the first time in this way, paying dearly for their experience. So they prefer doing without a powerful means of success, to running the dangers that accompany it. But they hesitate less to take part in political associations, which seem without danger to them, because in them they are not risking their own money. Now, they cannot take part for long in those associations without discovering how you maintain order among a great number of men, and by what process you succeed in making them march, in agreement and methodically, toward the same goal. They learn to submit their

will to that of all the others, and to subordinate their particular efforts to common action, all things that are no less necessary to know in civil associations than in political associations.

So political associations can be considered as great free schools, where all citizens come to learn the general theory of associations.

So even if political association would not directly serve the progress of civil association, it would still be harmful to the latter to destroy the first.

When citizens can associate only in certain cases, they regard association as a rare and singular process, and they hardly think of it.

When you allow them to associate freely in everything, they end up seeing in association the universal and, so to speak, unique means that men can use to attain the various ends that they propose. Each new need immediately awakens the idea of association. The art of association then becomes, as I said above, the mother science; everyone studies it and applies it.

When certain associations are forbidden and others allowed, it is difficult in advance to distinguish the first from the second. In case of doubt, you refrain from all, and a sort of public opinion becomes established that tends to make you consider any association like a daring and almost illicit enterprise.[1]

1. *That is true, above all, when it is the executive power that is charged with allowing or forbidding associations according to its arbitrary will.*

When the law limits itself to prohibiting certain associations and leaves to the courts the task of punishing those who disobey, the evil is very much less; each citizen then knows in advance more or less what is what; in a way he judges himself before his judges do so, and, avoiding forbidden associations, he devotes himself to permitted associations. All free peoples have always understood that the right of association could be limited in this way. But, if it happened that the legislator charged a man with disentangling in advance which associations are dangerous and which are useful, and left him free to destroy the seed of all associations or to allow them to be born, no one would be able any longer to foresee in advance in what case you can associate and in what other you must refrain from doing so; so the spirit of association would be completely struck with inertia. The first of these two laws attacks only certain associations; the second is addressed to society itself and wounds it. I conceive that a regular government might resort to the first, but I recognize in no government the right to bring about the second.

So it is a chimera to believe that the spirit of association, repressed at one point, will allow itself to develop with the same vigor at all the others, and that it will be enough to permit men to carry out certain enterprises together, for them to hurry to try it. When citizens have the ability and the habit of associating for all things, they will associate as readily for small ones as for great ones. But if they can associate only for small ones, they will not even find the desire and the capacity to do so. In vain will you allow them complete liberty to take charge of their business together; they will only nonchalantly use the rights that you grant them; and after you have exhausted yourself with efforts to turn them away from the forbidden associations, you will be surprised at your inability to persuade them to form the permitted ones.

I am not saying that there can be no civil associations in a country where political association is forbidden; for men can never live in society without giving themselves to some common enterprise. But I maintain that in such a country civil associations will always be very few in number, weakly conceived, ineptly led, and that they will never embrace vast designs, or will fail while wanting to carry them out.

This leads me naturally to think that liberty of association in political matters is not as dangerous for public tranquillity as is supposed, and that it could happen that after disturbing the State for a time, liberty of association strengthens it.[d]

In democratic countries, political associations form, so to speak, the only powerful individuals who aspire to rule the State. Consequently the governments [v. princes] of today consider these types of associations in the same way that the kings of the Middle Ages saw the great vassals of the crown: they feel a kind of instinctive horror for them and combat them at every occasion.

They have, on the contrary, a natural favor for civil associations, because they have easily discovered that the latter, instead of leading the mind of citizens toward public affairs, serve to distract it from these affairs, and by

d. According to Jean-Claude Lamberti, Tocqueville is referring here to the law on association of 16 February 1834. *Tocqueville et les deux Démocraties* (Paris: PUF, 1983), p. 104, note 42.

engaging citizens more and more in projects that cannot be accomplished without public peace, civil associations turn them away from revolutions. But the governments of today do not notice that political associations multiply and prodigiously facilitate civil associations, and that by avoiding a dangerous evil, they are depriving themselves of an effective remedy. When you see the Americans associate freely each day, with the purpose of making a political opinion prevail, of bringing a statesman to the government, or of wresting power from another man, you have difficulty understanding that men so independent do not at every moment fall into license.

If, on the other hand, you come to consider the infinite number of industrial enterprises that are being pursued in common in the United States, and you see on all sides Americans working without letup on the execution of some important and difficult plan, which would be confounded by the slightest revolution, you easily conceive why these men, so very busy, are not tempted to disturb the State or to destroy a public peace from which they profit.

Is it enough to see these things separately? Isn't it necessary to find the hidden bond that joins them? It is within political associations that the Americans of all the states, all minds and all ages, daily acquire the general taste for association and become familiar with its use. There they see each other in great number, talk together, understand each other and become active together in all sorts of enterprises. They then carry into civil life the notions that they have acquired in this way and make them serve a thousand uses.

So it is by enjoying a dangerous liberty that the Americans learn the art of making the dangers of liberty smaller.

If you choose a certain moment in the existence of a nation, it is easy to prove that political associations disturb the State and paralyze industry; but when you take the entire life of a people, it will perhaps be easy to demonstrate that liberty of association in political matters is favorable to the well-being and even to the tranquillity of citizens.

I said in the first part of this work: "The unlimited freedom of association cannot be confused with the freedom to write: the first is both less necessary and more dangerous than the second. A nation can set limits on the first without losing control over itself; sometimes it must set limits in

order to continue to be in control." And later I added: "You cannot conceal the fact that, of all liberties, the unlimited freedom of association, in political matters, is the last one that a people can bear. If unlimited freedom of association does not make a people fall into anarchy, it puts a people on the brink, so to speak, at every moment."

Thus, I do not believe that a nation is free at all times to allow its citizens the absolute right to associate in political matters; and I even doubt that there is any country in any period in which it would be wise to set no limits to the liberty of association.

A certain people, it is said, cannot maintain peace internally, inspire respect for the laws or establish enduring government, if it does not enclose the right of association within narrow limits. Such benefits are undoubtedly precious, and I conceive that, to acquire or to retain them, a nation agrees temporarily to impose great burdens on itself; but still it is good that the nation knows precisely what these benefits cost it.

That, to save the life of a man, you cut off his arm, I understand; but I do not want you to assure me that he is going to appear as dexterous as if he were not a one-armed man.

CHAPTER 8[a]

How the Americans Combat Individualism by the Doctrine of Interest Well Understood[b]

[I showed in a preceding chapter how equality of conditions developed among all men the taste for well-being, and directed their minds toward the search for what is useful.

Elsewhere, while talking about individualism, I have just shown how this same equality of conditions broke the artificial bonds that united citizens in aristocratic societies, and led each man to search for what is useful to himself alone.

These various changes in the social constitution and in the tastes of humanity cannot fail to influence singularly the theoretical idea that men form of their duties and their rights.][c]

When the world was led by a small number of powerful and rich individuals, the latter loved to form a sublime idea of the duties of man; they took pleasure in professing that it is glorious to forget self and that it is right

a. 1. As men are more equal and more detached from their fellows, the idea of devotion becomes more foreign, and it is more necessary to show how particular interest merges with general interest.

2. This is what is done in America. Not only is the doctrine of interest well understood *openly* professed there, but it is universally admitted.

3. The doctrine of interest well understood is the most appropriate one for the needs of a democratic people, and the moralists of our time should turn toward it (YTC, CVf, p. 28).

b. Former title in the manuscript: OF INTEREST WELL UNDERSTOOD AS PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE.

c. In the margin, with a bracket indicating this beginning: "Probably delete this."

to do good without interest, just like God. That was the official doctrine of this time in the matter of morality [{moral philosophy}].

I doubt that men were more virtuous in aristocratic centuries than in others, but it is certain that they then talked constantly about the beauties of virtue; they only studied in secret how it was useful. But as imagination soars less and as each person concentrates on himself, moralists become afraid of this idea of sacrifice, and they no longer dare to offer it to the human mind; so they are reduced to trying to find out if the individual advantage of citizens would not be to work toward the happiness of all, and, when they have discovered one of these points where particular interest meets with general interest and merges with it, they hasten to bring it to light; little by little similar observations multiply. What was only an isolated remark becomes a general doctrine, and you believe finally that you see that man, by serving his fellows, serves himself, and that his particular interest is to do good.[d]

[<But this doctrine is not accepted all at once or by all. Many receive a few parts of it and reject the rest. Some *adopt it at the bottom of their hearts and reject it with disdain* before the eyes of the world.>][e]

I have already shown, in several places in this work, how the inhabitants of the United States almost always knew how to combine their own well-being with that of their fellow citizens. What I want to note here is the general theory by the aid of which they succeed in doing so.[f]

d. "Democracy *destroys* the instinct for devotion, *reason* for it [devotion] must be found" (*Rubish,* 1).

e. In the margin: "To delete I think./
"These paragraphs seem to Édouard to merit some small development./
"Explain why some affect to despise this theory."

f. Democracy pushes each man to think only of himself; on the other hand, reason and experience indicate that it is sometimes necessary in his own interest to be concerned about others.

The philosophical doctrine of interest well understood as principal rule of human actions has presented itself to the human mind from time to time in all centuries, but in democratic centuries it besieges the human mind and entirely dominates the moral world.

[To the side] The barbarians forced each man to think only of himself; democracy leads them by themselves to want to do so" (*Rubish,* 1).

In the United States, you almost never say that virtue is beautiful. You maintain that it is useful, and you prove it every day. American moralists do not claim that you must sacrifice yourself for your fellows because it is great to do so; but they say boldly that such sacrifices are as necessary to the person who imposes them on himself as to the person who profits from them.[g]

They have noticed that, in their country and time, man was led back toward himself by an irresistible force and, losing hope of stopping him, they have thought only about guiding him.

So they do not deny that each man may follow his interest, but they strive to prove that the interest of each man is to be honest.

Here I do not want to get into the details of their reasons, which would take me away from my subject; it is enough for me to say that they have persuaded their fellow citizens.

A long time ago, Montaigne said: "When I would not follow the right road because of rectitude, I would follow it because I found by experience that in the end it is usually the happiest and most useful path."[h]

So the doctrine of interest well understood is not new; but, among the Americans of today, it has been universally admitted; it has become popular; you find it at the bottom of all actions; it pokes through all discussions. You find it no less in the mouths of the poor than in those of the rich.

In Europe the doctrine of interest is much cruder than in America, but at the same time, it is less widespread and above all less evident, and great devotions that are felt no more are still feigned among us every day.

The Americans, in contrast, take pleasure in explaining almost all the

g. In aristocratic centuries, you know your interest, but the philosophical doctrine is to scorn it.

In democratic centuries, you maintain that virtue and interest are in agreement.

[To the side] I need America to prove these two propositions, so I must finish rather than begin with it, in order to gather light on this essential point (*Rubish,* 1).

h. A note of the manuscript indicates that this quotation belongs to book II, chapter XVI of the *Essais.* The library of the Tocqueville château had an edition in three volumes dating from 1600.

actions of their life with the aid of interest well understood; they show with satisfaction how enlightened love of themselves leads them constantly to help each other and disposes them willingly to sacrifice for the good of the State a portion of their time and their wealth. I think that in this they often do not do themselves justice; for you sometimes see in the United States, as elsewhere, citizens give themselves to the disinterested and unconsidered impulses that are natural to man; but the Americans hardly ever admit that they yield to movements of this type; they prefer to honor their philosophy rather than themselves.[j]

I could stop here and not try to judge what I have just described. The extreme difficulty of the subject would be my excuse. But I do not want to take advantage of it, and I prefer that my readers, clearly seeing my purpose, refuse to follow me rather than remain in suspense.

Interest well understood is a doctrine not very lofty, but clear and sure. It does not try to attain great objectives, but without too much effort it attains all those it targets. Since the doctrine is within reach of all minds, each man grasps it easily and retains it without difficulty. Accommodating itself marvelously to the weaknesses of men, it easily gains great dominion and it is not difficult for it to preserve that dominion, because the doctrine turns personal interest back against itself and, to direct passions, uses the incentive that excites them.

The doctrine of interest well understood does not produce great devotions; but it suggests small sacrifices every day; by itself, it cannot make a

j. Some enlightenment makes men see how their personal interest differs from that of their fellows. A great deal of enlightenment shows them how the two interests often come to merge./

Three successive states:

1. *Ignorance.* Instinctive devotion.
2. *Half-knowledge.* Egoism.
3. *Complete enlightenment.* Thoughtful sacrifice./

There are two ways to make that understood by a people:

1. Experience. 2. Enlightenment.

The most difficult task of governments is not to govern, but to instruct men in governing them[selves (ed.)]./

The worst effect of a bad government is not the evil that it does, but the one that it suggests (*Rubish,* 1).

man virtuous, but it forms a multitude of steady, temperate, moderate, farsighted citizens who have self-control; and, if it does not lead directly to virtue by will, it imperceptibly draws closer to virtue by habits.[k]

If the doctrine of interest well understood came to dominate the moral world entirely, extraordinary virtues would undoubtedly be rarer. But I also think that then the coarsest depravities would be less common. The doctrine of interest well understood perhaps prevents some men from rising very far above the ordinary level of humanity; but a great number of others who fall below encounter the doctrine and cling to it. Consider a few individuals, it lowers them. Envisage the species, it elevates it.

I will not be afraid to say that the doctrine of interest well understood seems to me, of all philosophical theories, the most appropriate to the needs of the men of our time, and that I see in it the most powerful guarantee remaining to them against themselves. So it is principally toward this doctrine that the mind of the moralists of today should turn. Even if they were to judge it as imperfect, it would still have to be adopted as necessary.

I do not believe, everything considered, that there is more egoism among us than in America; the only difference is that there it is enlightened and here it is not. Each American knows how to sacrifice a portion of his particular interests in order to save the rest. We want to keep everything, and often everything escapes us.

I see around me only men who seem to want to teach their contemporaries, every day by their word and their example, that what is useful is never dishonorable. Will I never finally find some men who undertake to make their contemporaries understand how what is honorable can be useful?

There is no power on earth that can prevent the growing equality of

k. "The *beauty* of virtue is the favorite thesis of moralists under aristocracy. Its *utility* under democracy" (*Rubish,* 1).

"Interest well understood is not contrary to the disinterested advance of the good. These are two different things, but not opposite. Great souls for whom this doctrine cannot be enough, pass in a way through it and go beyond it, while ordinary souls stop there" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 85).

conditions from leading the human mind toward the search for what is useful, and from disposing each citizen to become enclosed within himself.

So you must expect individual interest to become more than ever the principal, if not the sole motivating force of the actions of men; but how each man will understand his individual interest remains to be known.

If citizens, while becoming equal, remained ignorant and coarse, it is difficult to predict to what stupid excess their egoism could be led, and you cannot say in advance into what shameful miseries they would plunge themselves, out of fear of sacrificing something of their well-being to the prosperity of their fellows.[m]

I do not believe that the doctrine of interest, as it is preached in America, is evident in all its parts; but it contains a great number of truths so evident that it is enough to enlighten men in order for them to see them. So enlighten them at all cost, for the century of blind devotions and instinctive virtues is already fleeing far from us, and I see the time drawing near when liberty, the public peace and the social order itself will not be able to do without enlightenment.[n]

m. "Utility of provincial institutions in order to create centers of common interest in democracy. National interest is not enough. It is necessary to multiply links, to bring men to see each other, understand each other, and have ideas, sentiments in common" (*Rubish,* 1).

n. Fragment that belongs to the *rubish* of the chapter:

> Doctrine of interest./
>
> [To the side: This could be placed as well in sentiments and tastes. To think about it.]
>
> Not very elevated point of view from which the Americans envisage human actions. Doctrine of interest followed elsewhere, *professed* in America. Effort to make it a social doctrine. *Succeeds in fact in making society proceed comfortably, but without grandeur.*
>
> {To put perhaps before or after what I say about religion as political element.}/
>
> This, among the Americans in particular and among democratic peoples in general, is clearly the result: 1. of egoism above all that makes you think only of yourself; 2. of the concentration of the soul in material things.
>
> So this must be treated only after these two ideas are known; this chapter will be only their corollary./
>
> I will first demonstrate that the Americans are led in general to concentrate on their interest and then, that they have made this way of acting into a philosophical theory./

That the legislators of democracies are not able to prevent the establishment and development of this doctrine, that all their effort should be limited to getting the most out of it, to making it so that men have a real interest in doing good, or at least to making this interest clear to all. That is useful in all societies, but very much more useful in those in which men cannot withdraw to the *platonic* enjoyment of doing good and in which they see the other world ready to escape them.

It is equally necessary that men, having reached this point, be enlightened at all cost, for there is enough truth in the notion that man has an interest in doing good, that widespread enlightenment cannot fail to make man discover it.

Proof of this, morality of the well-enlightened man.

Political consequences. Extreme efforts that the legislator must make in democracies to spiritualize man. Particular necessity for religions in democracy; even dogmatic and not very reasonable religions, for lack of anything better. Show heaven even if it is through the worst instruments./

Distinctions to make between the different doctrines of *interest.*/

There is a doctrine of interest that consists of believing that you must make the interest of other men yield before your own and that it is natural and reasonable to embrace only the latter. This is an instinctive, crude egoism that hardly merits the name of doctrine.

[In the margin: The doctrine of interest can teach how to live, but not how to die./

The doctrine of interest must not be confused with the doctrine of the *useful.* It is contained in that of the useful, but it is only a part of it.]

There is another doctrine of interest that consists of believing that the best way to be happy is to serve your interest and to be good, honest . . . in a word, that interest well understood requires you often to sacrifice your interest or rather, that to follow your interest over all, you often have to neglect it in detail.

This is a philosophical doctrine that has its value.

[In the margin: Great passions of the *true,* the *beautiful* and the *good.* Analogous things flowing from [the (ed.)] same source, equally rare, producing great men of learning, great men of literature and great virtues.]

There is, finally, a doctrine infinitely purer, more elevated, less material, according to which the basis of actions is duty. Man penetrates divine thought with his intelligence. He sees that the purpose of God is order, and he freely associates himself as much as he is able with this great design. He cooperates with it in his humble sphere, depending on his strength, in order to fulfill his destination and to obey his mandate. There is still personal interest there, for there is a proud and private enjoyment in such points of view and hope for remuneration in a better world; but interest there is as small, as secretive and as legitimate as possible.

Positive religions render this interest more visible; they render these sentiments stronger, more popular. They generally mix the two things in a clever way that facilitates practice. In Christianity, for example, we are told that it is necessary to do good *out of love of God* (magnificent expression of the doctrine that I have just explained) and also to gain eternal life.

Thus Christianity at one end touches the doctrine of interest well understood and at the other the doctrine that I developed afterward and that I could call with Christianity itself, the doctrine of the love of God. In sum, a religion very superior in terms of loftiness to the doctrine of interest well understood because it places interest in the other world and draws us out of this cesspool of human and material interests.

The doctrine of interest well understood can make men honest.

But it is only that of the love of God that makes men virtuous. The one teaches how to live, the other teaches how to die, and how can you make men who do not want to die live well for long?

Why aristocratic peoples are led more than democratic peoples to adopt the second doctrines more than the first.

Class that has material happiness without thinking about it, that can think and is not preoccupied by the trouble to work and to acquire. Another class that by working can scarcely hope to reach material happiness and that turns naturally toward the non-material world.

On the contrary, in democracies each man has just enough material happiness to desire more of it, enough of a chance of gaining it to fix the mind on material happiness or at least that of this world./

Another point of view.

The philosophical doctrine that I spoke about is based on interest.

Religious doctrines are also based on interest.

But there is this great difference between them, that the first places this interest in this world and the others outside of it, which is enough to give actions an infinitely less material and loftier purpose; that the ones out of necessity profess to scorn material goods, while the other, restricting itself to that life, cannot fail to hold material goods in a certain esteem. So although the cause of actions is the same, these actions are very different./

Religions have, by design, made such an intimate union of the doctrine of the love of God and of that of interest, that those who are sincerely devout are constantly mistaken, and it happens that they believe that they are doing actions solely in view of the reward to come, actions that are principally suggested to them by the most pure, most noble and most disinterested instincts of human nature (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 9[a]

How the Americans Apply the Doctrine of Interest Well Understood in the Matter of Religion[b]

If the doctrine of interest well understood had only this world in view, it would be far from enough; for a great number of sacrifices can find their reward only in the other; and whatever intellectual effort you make to feel the usefulness of virtue, it will always be difficult to make a man live well who does not want to die.

So it is necessary to know if the doctrine of interest well understood can be easily reconciled with religious beliefs.

The philosophers who teach this doctrine say to men that, to be happy in life, you must watch over your passions and carefully repress their excesses; that you cannot gain lasting happiness except by denying yourself

a. 1. If the doctrine of interest well understood had only this life in view, it would be far from enough; so we must see if it is not contrary to religions that promote action with the other in view.

2. If you look closely you will see that interest is the motivating force of nearly all religious men, and the lever used by nearly all the founders of religion.

So the doctrine of interest well understood in itself is not contrary to religions, since religions only apply it in another way.

It is easy as well to prove that the men who adopt it are very disposed than [*sic*] others to submit to religious beliefs and practices.

3. Examples of the Americans (YTC, CVf, pp. 28–29). There is no *rubish* for this chapter.

b. At the first page of the manuscript: "<I am afraid of being superficial and incomplete and commonplace in these two chapters, while there is no matter that requires more knowledge and depth and originality.>"

a thousand passing enjoyments, and that finally you must triumph over yourself constantly in order to serve yourself better.

The founders of nearly all religions adhered more or less to the same language. Without pointing out another path to men, they only placed the goal further away; instead of placing in this world the prize for the sacrifices that they impose, they put it in the other.[c]

Nonetheless, I refuse to believe that all those who practice virtue because of the spirit of religion act only with a reward in view.

I have met zealous Christians who constantly forgot themselves in order to work with more fervor for the happiness of all, and I have heard them claim that they acted this way only to merit the good things of the other world; but I cannot prevent myself from thinking that they are deluding themselves. I respect them too much to believe them.

Christianity tells us, it is true, that you must prefer others to self in order to gain heaven; but Christianity also tells us that you must do good to your fellows out of love of God. That is a magnificent expression; man penetrates divine thought with his intelligence, he sees that the purpose of God is order; he associates freely with this great design; and even while sacrificing his particular interests to this admirable order of all things, he expects no other recompense than the pleasure of contemplating it.

So I do not believe that the sole motivating force of religious men is interest; but I think that interest is the principal means that religions themselves use to lead men, and I do not doubt that it is from this side that they take hold of the crowd and become popular.

So I do not see clearly why the doctrine of interest well understood would put off men of religious beliefs, and it seems to me, on the contrary, that I am sorting out how it brings them closer.

[All the actions of the human mind are linked together, and once man is set by his will on a certain path, he then marches there without wanting to, and he feels himself carried along by his own inertia.]

I suppose that, to attain happiness in this world, a man resists instinct in all that he encounters and coldly considers all the actions of his life, that

c. In the margin: "and that alone is enough to give to religions a great advantage over philosophy . . ."

instead of yielding blindly to the heat of his first desires, he has learned the art of combating them, and that he has become accustomed to sacrificing effortlessly the pleasure of the moment to the permanent interest of his entire life.

If such a man has faith in the religion that he professes, it will hardly cost him anything to submit to the inconveniences that it imposes. Reason itself counsels him to do it, and custom prepared him in advance to endure it.

If he has conceived doubts about the object of his hopes, he will not let himself be stopped easily, and he will judge that it is wise to risk a few of the good things of this world in order to maintain his rights to the immense heritage that has been promised to him in the other.

"To be mistaken in believing the Christian religion true," said Pascal, "there is not much to lose; but what misfortune to be mistaken in believing it false!"[d]

The Americans do not affect a crude indifference for the other life; they do not assume a puerile pride in scorning the perils that they hope to escape.

So they practice their religion without shame and without weakness; but you ordinarily see, even amid their zeal, something so tranquil, so methodical and so calculated, that it seems that it is the reason much more than the heart that leads them to the steps of the altar.[e]

Not only do Americans follow their religion by interest, but they often place in this world the interest that you can have in following religion. In the Middle Ages, priests spoke only about the other life: they hardly worried about proving that a sincere Christian can be a happy man here below.

But American preachers come back to earth constantly, and only with

d. To the side: "This thought, which does not seem to me worthy of the great soul of Pascal, sums up perfectly well the state of souls in the countries where reason is becoming enlightened and stronger at the same time that religious beliefs falter." *Pensée* 36 in the Lafuma edition.

e. In the margin: "<So the doctrine of interest well understood can become the ruling philosophy among a people without harming the spirit of religion; but it cannot fail to give the spirit of religion a certain character, and you must expect that, in the soul of the *devout,* it will make the desire to gain heaven predominate over the pure love of God.>"

great pain can they take their eyes away from it. To touch their listeners better, they show them every day how religious beliefs favor liberty and public order, and it is often difficult to know, hearing them, if the principal object of religion is to gain eternal felicity in the other world or well-being in this one.

CHAPTER 10[a]

Of the Taste for Material Well-Being in America[b]

a. 1. The taste for material well-being is universal in America. Why?

1. In aristocracies, the upper classes, since they have never acquired well-being or feared losing it, readily apply their passions elsewhere and on a more lofty level. Since the lower classes do not have the idea of bettering their lot and are not close enough to well-being to desire it, their imagination is thrown toward the other world.

2. In democratic centuries, on the contrary, each person tries hard to attain well-being or fears losing it. That constantly keeps the soul in suspense on this point (YTC, CVf, p. 29).

First organization of this part of the book in the *Rubish:*

OF THE TASTE FOR MATERIAL ENJOYMENTS IN DEMOCRACIES./

1. Of the taste for material enjoyments in America.
2. Of the different effects that the taste for material enjoyments produces in an aristocracy and in a democracy.
3. Of some bizarre sects that are arising in America.
4. Of restlessness of the heart in America.
5. How the taste for material enjoyments is combined among the Americans with love of liberty and concerns for public affairs.
6. How equality of conditions (or democracy) leads Americans toward industrial professions.
7. How the religious beliefs of the Americans hold within certain limits the excessive taste for material well-being (*Rubish* of chapter 15 of this part, *Rubish,* 1).

b. In the *Rubish* there is a voluminous sheaf bearing the title RUBISH AND IDEAS RELATING TO THE CHAPTERS ON MATERIAL ENJOYMENTS. It contains notes and pages of *rubish* for this chapter and for those that follow, up to and including chapter 18. The *rubish* for this chapter retains another sheaf with this note on the cover:

WHAT MAKES THE LOVE OF RICHES PREDOMINATE OVER ALL OTHER PASSIONS IN DEMOCRATIC CENTURIES./

Chapter to insert in the course of the book, probably before industrial careers./

In America, the passion for material well-being is not always exclusive, but it is general; if everyone does not experience it in the same way, everyone feels it. The concern to satisfy the slightest needs of the body and to provide for the smallest conveniences of life preoccupies minds universally.

Something similar is seen more and more in Europe.

Among the causes that produce these similar effects in two worlds, several are close to my subject, and I must point them out.

When wealth is fixed in the same families by inheritance, you see a great number of men who enjoy material well-being, without feeling the exclusive taste for well-being.

What most strongly holds the human heart is not the peaceful possession of a precious object but the imperfectly satisfied desire to possess it and the constant fear of losing it.

In aristocratic societies the rich, never knowing a state different from their own, do not fear its changing; they scarcely imagine another one. So for them material well-being is not the goal of life; it is a way of living. They consider it, in a way, like existence, and enjoy it without thinking about it.

Since the natural and instinctive taste that all men feel for well-being is thus satisfied without difficulty and without fear, their soul proceeds else-

At ambition, what diverts from great ambition, it is the petty ambition for money.

You devote yourself to the petty ambition for money as preliminary to the other and, when you have devoted yourself to it for a long time, you are incapable of moving away from it./

To put I think before material enjoyments. The desire for wealth is close to the desire for material enjoyments, but is distinct.

The only page of the sheaf bears particularly the following notes:

"Regularity. Monotony of life./

"That is not democratic but commercial, or at least it is democratic only in so far as democracy pushes toward commerce and industry.

"There are also religious habits in the middle of that."

In another place: "In aristocracies, even the life of artisans is varied; they have games, ceremonies, a form of worship that serves as a diversion from the monotony of their works. Their body is attached to their profession, not their soul.

"It is not the same thing with democratic peoples" (*Rubish,* 1).

where and attaches itself to some more difficult and greater enterprise that animates it and carries it away.

In this way, in the very midst of material enjoyments, the members of an aristocracy often demonstrate a proud scorn for these very enjoyments and find singular strength when they must finally do without them. All the revolutions that have disturbed or destroyed aristocracies have shown with what ease men accustomed to superfluity were able to do without necessities, while men who have laboriously attained comfort are hardly ever able to live after losing it.[c]

If, from the upper ranks, I pass to the lower classes, I will see analogous effects produced by different causes.

Among nations where aristocracy dominates society and keeps it immobile, the people end by becoming accustomed to poverty as the rich are to their opulence. The latter are not preoccupied by material well-being, because they possess it without difficulty; the former do not think about material well-being, because they despair of gaining it and do not know it well enough to desire it.[d]

c. "≠Byron remarks somewhere that in his voyages, he easily bore and suffered almost without complaint the privations that made his valet despair. The same remark could have been made by a thousand others≠" (*Rubish,* 1). Letter of Byron to his mother, Athens, 17 January 1831; reproduced in *Correspondence of Lord Byron with a Friend . . .* (Paris: A. and W. Calignani, 1825), I, pp. 21–22; the same publishing house published a French version of this text.

d. How the different forms of government can more or less favor the taste for money among men./

Among nations that have an *aristocracy* you seek money because it leads to power. Among nations that have a *nobility* you seek it to console yourself for being excluded from power. It seems that it is among democratic peoples that you have to seek it the least. There as elsewhere, ordinary souls undoubtedly continue to be attached to it; but ambitious spirits take it neither as principal goal and as a makeshift equivalent [? (ed.)].

You object to me in vain that in the United States, which forms a democracy, the love of money is excessive and that in France, where we turn daily toward democracy, love of money is becoming more and more the dominant passion. I will reply that political institutions definitively exercise only a limited influence over the inclinations of the human heart. If love of money is great in France and in the United States, that comes from the fact that in France mores, beliefs and characters are becoming depraved, and that in the United States the material condition of the country presents continual opportunities to the passion to grow rich. In the two countries you love

In these sorts of societies the imagination of the poor is pushed toward the other world; the miseries of real life cramp their imagination; but it escapes those miseries and goes to find its enjoyments beyond.

When, on the contrary, ranks are mingled and privileges destroyed, when patrimonies divide and enlightenment and liberty spread, the desire to gain well-being occurs to the imagination of the poor, and the fear of losing it to the mind of the rich.[e] A multitude of mediocre fortunes is established. Those who possess them have enough material enjoyments to conceive the taste for these enjoyments, and not enough to be content with them. They never obtain these enjoyments except with effort and devote themselves to them only with trepidation.

So they are constantly attached to pursuing or to retaining these enjoyments so precious, so incomplete and so fleeting. [Preoccupied by this sole concern, they often forget all the rest.

It is not the wealth, but the work that you devote to obtaining it for yourself that encloses the human heart within the taste for well-being.][f]

I seek a passion that is natural to men who are excited and limited by the obscurity of their origin or the mediocrity of their fortune, and I find none more appropriate than the taste for well-being. The passion for well-being is essentially a passion of the middle class; it grows and spreads with

money not because there are democratic institutions, but even though there are democratic institutions (YTC, CVa, pp. 53–54).

On 28 May 1831, Tocqueville writes from New York to his brother, Édouard:

> We are very truly here in another world; political passions here are only on the surface. The profound passion, the only one that profoundly moves the human heart, the passion of every day, is the acquisition of wealth, and there are a thousand means to acquire it without disturbing the State. You have to be very blind in my opinion to want to compare this country to Europe and to adapt to one what suits the other; I believed it before leaving France; I believe it more and more while examining the society in the midst of which I now live; it is a people of merchants who are busy with public affairs when its [*sic*] work leaves it the leisure (YTC, BIa2).

e. "What makes democratic nations egotistic is not even so much the great number of independent citizens that they contain as the great number of citizens who are constantly reaching independence" (YTC, CVa, pp. 7–8).

f. To the side: "<This sentence is good, but interrupts the flow of the idea.>"

this class; it becomes preponderant with it. From there it gains the upper ranks of society and descends to the people.

I did not meet, in America, a citizen so poor who did not cast a look of hope and envy on the enjoyments of the rich, and whose imagination did not grasp in advance the good things that fate stubbornly refused him.

On the other hand, I never saw among the rich of the United States this superb disdain for material well-being that is sometimes shown even within the heart of the most opulent and most dissolute aristocracies.

Most of these rich have been poor; they have felt the sting of need; they have long fought against a hostile fortune, and now that victory is won, the passions that accompanied the struggle survive it; they remain as if intoxicated amid these small enjoyments that they have pursued for forty years.

It is not that in the United States, as elsewhere, you do not find a fairly large number of rich men who, holding their property by inheritance, possess without effort an opulence that they have not gained. But even these do not appear less attached to the enjoyments of material life. The love of well-being has become the national and dominant taste. The great current of human passions leads in this direction, it sweeps everything along in its wake.[g]

g. *"Other reason.* In a democratic society the only *visible* advantage that you can enjoy over your fellows is wealth. This explains the desire for *riches,* but not that for *material enjoyments.* These two things are close, but are nonetheless distinct. While it comes to the aid of sensuality here, pride in aristocracies often runs counter to it; you want to distinguish yourself from those who do not have money" (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER II[a]

Of the Particular Effects Produced by the Love of Material Enjoyments in Democratic Centuries[b]

a. When an aristocracy gives itself to the passion for material enjoyments, it aims at extraordinary pleasures; it falls into a thousand excesses that shame human nature and disturb society.

In democratic countries the taste for material enjoyments is a universal passion, constant, but contained. Everyone conceives it and gives himself to it constantly, but it leads no one to great excesses. Everyone seeks to satisfy the slightest needs easily and without cost rather than to obtain great pleasures.

This type of passion for material enjoyments can be reconciled with order and to a certain point with religion and morality. It does not always debilitate souls, but it softens them and silently relaxes their springs of action (YTC, CVf, p. 30).

b. Title in the *rubish:* OF THE DIFFERENT EFFECTS THAT THE TASTE FOR MATERIAL ENJOYMENTS PRODUCES IN AN ARISTOCRACY AND IN A DEMOCRACY.

At another place in the *rubish:* "THAT THE TASTE FOR WELL-BEING AND FOR MATERIAL ENJOYMENTS IN DEMOCRACIES IS MORE TRANQUIL, LEADS TO LESS EXCESS THAN IN ARISTOCRACIES AND CAN BE COMBINED WITH A SORT OF SPIRIT OF ORDER AND MORALITY. 2nd chapter.

"Honest materialism" (*Rubish,* 1). In a letter addressed to an unidentified person, Tocqueville had expressed the same idea in this way:

> Author of all these revolutions, carried away himself by the movement that he brought about, the American of the United States ends by feeling pushed by an irresistible need for action; in Europe there are philosophers who preach human perfection; for him, the possible has hardly any limit. To change is to improve; he has constantly before his eyes the image of indefinite perfection that throws deep within his heart an extraordinary restlessness and a great distaste for the present.
>
> Here, the enjoyments of the soul are not very important, the pleasures of imagination do not exist, but an immense door is open for achieving material happiness and each man rushes toward it. In order to reach it, you abandon parents, family, country; you try in the course of one life ten different roads to attain wealth. The same man has been priest, doctor, tradesman, farmer.
>
> I do not know if you live here more happily than elsewhere, but at least you feel

You could believe, from what precedes, that the love of material enjoyments must constantly lead the Americans toward disorder in morals, disturb families and in the end compromise the fate of society itself.

But this is not so; the passion for material enjoyments produces within democracies other effects than among aristocratic peoples.

It sometimes happens that weariness with public affairs, the excess of wealth, the ruin of beliefs, the decadence of the State, little by little turn the heart of an aristocracy toward material enjoyments alone. At other times, the power [v. tyranny] of the prince or the weakness of the people, without robbing the nobles of their fortune, forces them to withdraw from power, and by closing the path to great undertakings to them, abandons them to the restlessness of their desires; they then fall heavily back onto themselves, and they seek in the enjoyments of the body to forget their past grandeur.

When the members of an aristocratic body turn exclusively in this way toward material enjoyments, they usually gather at this point alone all the energy that the long habit of power gave them.

To such men the pursuit of well-being is not enough; they require a sumptuous depravity and a dazzling corruption. They worship the material magnificently and seem to vie with one another in their desire to excel in the art of making themselves into brutes.

The more an aristocracy has been strong, glorious and free, the more it will appear depraved, and whatever the splendor of its virtues had been, I dare to predict it will always be surpassed by the brilliance of its vices.[c]

The taste for material enjoyments does not lead democratic peoples to

existence less; and you arrive at the great abyss without having had the time to notice the road that you followed.

These men call themselves virtuous; I deny it. They are *steady,* that is all that I am able to say in their favor. They steal from the neighbor and respect his wife, which I can only explain to myself because they love money and do not have the time to make love (Letter of 8 November 1831, YTC, BI12).

c. "≠I know nothing more deplorable than the spectacle presented by an aristocracy that, losing its power, has remained master of its wealth≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

such excesses.[d] There the love of well-being shows itself to be a tenacious, exclusive, universal passion, but contained. It is not a question of building vast palaces, of vanquishing or of deceiving nature, of exhausting the universe, in order to satisfy better the passions of a man; it is a matter of adding a few feet to his fields, of planting an orchard, of enlarging a house, of making life easier and more comfortable each moment, of avoiding discomfort and satisfying the slightest needs effortlessly and almost without cost. These goals are small, but the soul becomes attached to them; it thinks about them every day and very closely; these goals finish by hiding from the soul the rest of the world, and they sometimes come to stand between the soul and God.

This, you will say, cannot be applied except to those among the citizens whose fortune is mediocre; the rich will show tastes analogous to those that the rich reveal in aristocratic centuries. That I dispute.[e]

Concerning material enjoyments, the most opulent citizens of a democracy will not show tastes very different from those of the people, whether, because having emerged from the people, they really share their tastes, or whether they believe they must submit to them. In democratic societies, the sensuality of the public has taken on a certain moderate and tranquil appearance, to which all souls are obliged to conform. It is as difficult to escape the common rule in its vices as in its virtues.

So the rich who live amid democratic nations aim for the satisfaction of their slightest needs rather than for extraordinary enjoyments; they satisfy a multitude of small desires and do not give themselves to any great disordered passion. They fall therefore into softness rather than debauchery.

This particular taste that the men of democratic centuries conceive for

d. "In aristocracies the taste for material well-being breaks the bonds of society, in democracies it tightens them" (*Rubish,* 1).

e. In the *rubish,* the sentence says: "cannot be applied except to the poor of democracies." On this subject, you read as well the following note: "The remark of Édouard on this point is this:

" 'I am speaking here,' he says, 'only about the *poor* or at most about people who are *well-off,* but there are rich people in democracies and it must be explained why these rich men are also forced to pursue material enjoyments in small ways and share on this point the instincts of the poor.

" 'True remark' " (*Rubish,* 1).

material enjoyments is not naturally opposed to order; on the contrary, it often needs order to satisfy itself. Nor is it the enemy of regularity of morals; for good morals are useful to public tranquillity and favor industry. Often it even comes to be combined with a sort of religious morality; you want to be as well-off as possible in this world, without renouncing your chances in the other.

Among material goods, there are some whose possession is criminal; you take care to do without them. There are others whose use is allowed by religion and morality; to the latter you give unreservedly your heart, your imagination, your life, and by trying hard to grasp them, you lose sight of these more precious goods that make the glory and the grandeur of the human species.

What I reproach equality for is not carrying men toward the pursuit of forbidden enjoyments; it is for absorbing them entirely in the pursuit of permitted enjoyments.

In this way there could well be established in the world a kind of honest materialism that would not corrupt souls, but would soften them and end by silently relaxing all their springs of action.

CHAPTER 12[a]

Why Certain Americans Exhibit So Excited a Spiritualism[b]

Although the desire to acquire the goods of this world is the dominant passion of the Americans, there are moments of respite when their soul seems suddenly to break the material bonds that hold it and to escape impetuously toward heaven.[c]

In all of the states of the Union, but principally in the half-populated regions of the West, you sometimes meet itinerant preachers who peddle the divine word from place to place.

Entire families, old people, women and children cross difficult places and go through uninhabited woods in order to come from far away to hear them; and when these people have found the preachers, for several days and

a. Although the Americans have as a dominant passion the acquisition of the goods of this world, spiritualism shows itself from time to time among all, and exclusively among some, with singular forms and a fervor that often goes nearly to extravagance.

Camp meetings.

Bizarre sects.

These different effects come from the same cause.

The soul has natural needs that must be satisfied. If you want to imprison it in contemplation of the needs of the body, it ends by escaping and in its momentum it does not stop even at the limits of common sense (YTC, CVf, pp. 30–31).

b. Original title in the *rubish:* OF SOME BIZARRE SECTS THAT ARISE IN AMERICA. See the appendix SECTS IN AMERICA.

c. On the jacket of the manuscript: "Small chapter that must be retained only if someone formally advises me to do so.

"The core of the idea is questionable. Everything considered there were more mystical extravagances in the Middle Ages (centuries of aristocracy) than in America today.

"Moreover, several of these ideas reappear or have already appeared (*I believe*) in the book!"

several nights, while listening to them, they forget their concern for public and private affairs and even the most pressing needs of the body.

[<≠America is assuredly the country in the world in which the sentiment of individual power has the most sway. But several religious sects have been founded in the United States that, despairing of moderating the taste for material enjoyments, have gone as far as destroying the incentive of property by establishing community of goods within them.≠>][d]

You find here and there, within American society, some souls totally filled with an excited and almost fierce spiritualism that you hardly find in Europe. From time to time bizarre sects arise there that try hard to open extraordinary paths to eternal happiness. Religious madness is very common there.

This must not surprise us.

Man has not given himself the taste for the infinite and the love of what is immortal. These sublime instincts do not arise from a caprice of the will; they have their unchanging foundation in his nature; they exist despite his efforts. He can hinder and deform them, but not destroy them.

The soul has needs that must be satisfied; and whatever care you take to distract it from itself, it soon grows bored, restless and agitated amid the enjoyments of the senses.[e]

If the spirit of the great majority of humanity ever concentrated solely on the pursuit of material goods, you can expect that a prodigious reaction would take place in the souls of some men. The latter would throw themselves frantically into the world of spirits, for fear of remaining hampered in the overly narrow constraints that the body wanted to impose on them.

So you should not be astonished if, within a society that thinks only about the earth, you would find a small number of individuals who wanted

d. In the margin: "≠All this shows the weakness of the idea by recalling the *monasteries,* institutions quite differently spiritualist than the small associations that I am speaking about.≠"

e. "≠When I {read the impractical laws of Plato} see Plato in his sublime reveries want to forbid commerce and industry to the citizens and, in order to release them better from coarse desires, want to take away even the possession of their children, I think of his contemporaries, and the sensual democracy of Athens makes me understand the laws of this imaginary republic whose portrait he has drawn for us≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

to look only to heaven. I would be surprised if, among a people solely preoccupied by its well-being, mysticism did not soon make progress.[f]

It is said that the persecutions of the emperors and the tortures of the circus populated the deserts of the Thebaid; as for me, I think that it was much more the delights of Rome and the Epicurean philosophy of Greece.[g]

If the social state, circumstances and laws did not so narrowly confine the American spirit to the pursuit of well-being, it is to be believed that when the American spirit came to occupy itself with non-material things, it would show more reserve and more experience, and that it would control itself without difficulty. But it feels imprisoned within the limits beyond which it seems it is not allowed to go. As soon as it crosses those limits, it does not know where to settle down, and it often runs without stopping beyond the bounds of common sense.[h]

f. "I would not be surprised if the first monasteries to be established in America are trappist monasteries" (*Rubish,* 1).

g. There is in the very nature of man a natural and permanent disposition that pushes his soul despite habits, laws, customs . . . toward the contemplation of elevated and intellectual things.

This natural disposition is found in democracies as elsewhere. And it can even be exalted and perfected there by a sort of reaction to the *material* and the *ordinary* that abound in these sorts of societies.

When society presents elevated and grand points of view, the kinds of souls that I have just spoken about can allow themselves to be caught by and attach themselves to this half-good, instead of detaching themselves entirely from the earth in order to go to find absolute good.

The dissolute orgies of Rome filled the deserts of Thebaid.

K[ergorlay (ed.)]., 13 March 1836 (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 5).

h. "≠If the Americans had a literature this would be even more perceptible. Some would want to escape from monotony by the bizarre, the singular. You could see a mystical literature within a materialistic society./

"Exalted spiritualism. Intellectual orgies.≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 13[a]

Why the Americans Appear So Restless Amid Their Well-Being

You still sometimes find, in certain remote districts of the Old World, small populations that have been as if forgotten amid the universal tumult and that have remained unchanged when everything around them moved. Most of these peoples are very ignorant and very wretched; they are not involved in governmental affairs and often governments oppress them. But they usually show a serene face, and they often exhibit a cheerful mood.

I saw in America the most free and most enlightened men placed in the

a. Of restlessness of the heart in America. Although the Americans are a very prosperous people, they seem almost always restless and care-ridden; they constantly change places, careers, desires.

That comes principally from these causes:

Equality makes the love of the enjoyments of this world predominate. Now

1. Men who restrict themselves to the pursuit of the enjoyments of this world are always pressed by the idea of the brevity of life. They fear having missed the shortest road that could lead them to happiness.

2. The taste for material enjoyments causes intense desires, but leads easily to discouragement. For the effort that you make to attain the enjoyment must not surpass the enjoyment.

3. Equality suggests a thousand times more desires than it can satisfy. It excites ambition and deceives it. Men can achieve anything, but their individual weakness and competition limit them (YTC, CVf, p. 31).

This chapter appears with the same title OF RESTLESSNESS OF THE HEART IN AMERICA in the *rubish* and manuscript. A page of the *rubish* contains the following note: "Small chapter done with great difficulty. To delete perhaps, but to review in any case. Perhaps in order to avoid the commonplace, I fell into the *forced.*/

"Immoderate desire for happiness in this world, that arises from democracy. *Idea to make emerge better from the chapter"* (*Rubish,* 1).

happiest condition in the world; it seemed to me that a kind of cloud habitually covered their features; they appeared to me grave and almost sad, even in their pleasures.[b]

The principal reason for this is that the first do not think about the evils that they endure, while the others think constantly about the goods that they do not have.[c]

It is a strange thing to see with what kind of feverish ardor the Americans pursue well-being, and how they appear tormented constantly by a vague fear of not having chosen the shortest road that can lead to it.[d]

The inhabitant of the United States is attached to the goods of this world, as if he was assured of not dying, and he hastens so much to seize those goods that pass within his reach, that you would say that at every instant he is afraid of ceasing to live before enjoying them. He seizes all of

b. I arrived one night in the company of several savages at the house of an American planter. It is the dwelling of a rich planter and at the same time a tavern. You saw reigning there great ease and even a sort of rustic luxury. I was brought into a well-lighted and carefully heated room in which several men of leisure from the neighborhood were already gathered around a table laden with grain whiskey. These men were all more or less drunk, but their drunkenness had a grave and somber character that struck me. They talked painfully about public affairs, about the price of houses, about the hazards of commerce and the cycles of industry. The Indians remained outside, although the night was rainy and they had [only (ed.)] a few bad rags of blankets to cover themselves. They had lighted a large fire and sat around on the humid earth. They spoke happily among themselves. I did not understand the meaning of their speeches, but the noisy bursts of their joy at each instant penetrated the gravity of our banquet (*Rubish,* 1).

c. "The inhabitant of the United States has all the goods of this world within reach, but can grasp none of them without effort" (*Rubish,* 1).

d. "All of that still much more marked in the *revolutionary* period and in *unbelieving* democracies./

"The Americans are *materialistic* by their *tastes,* but they are not by their *ideas.* They ardently pursue the goods of this world, but they have not ceased believing in the existence of another one" (*Rubish,* 1).

them, but without gripping them, and he soon lets them escape from his hands in order to run after new enjoyments.[e]

A man, in the United States, carefully builds a house in which to spend his old age, and he sells it while the ridgepole is being set; he plants a garden and he rents it as he is about to taste its fruits; he clears a field, and he leaves to others the trouble of gathering the harvest. He embraces a profession, and he leaves it. He settles in a place that he soon leaves in order to carry his changing desires elsewhere. If his private affairs give him some respite, he immediately plunges into the whirl of politics. And when, near the end of a year filled with work, he still has a little leisure, he takes his restless curiosity here and there across the vast limits of the United States. He will do as much as five hundred leagues in a few days in order to distract himself better from his happiness.

Death finally intervenes and stops him before he has grown weary of this useless pursuit of a complete felicity that always escapes.

You are at first astounded contemplating this singular agitation exhibited by so many happy men, in the very midst of abundance. This spectacle is, however, as old as the world; what is new is to see it presented by an entire people.

The taste for material enjoyments must be considered as the primary source of this secret restlessness that is revealed in the actions of Americans, and of this inconstancy that they daily exemplify.

The man who has confined his heart solely to the pursuit of the goods of this world is always in a hurry, for he has only a limited time to find them, to take hold of them and to enjoy them. The memory of the brevity of life goads him constantly. Apart from the goods that he possesses, at every instant he imagines a thousand others that death will prevent him from tasting if he does not hurry. This thought fills him with uneasiness, fears,

e. In a first version of the *rubish:*

I met a man in the United States who, after having for a long time hidden great talents in poverty, finally became the wealthiest man of his profession. At the same time in England lived another individual who, following the same career as the first man, had amassed greater wealth. News of it reached the American and this colleague who was on the other side of the ocean troubled his sleep and kept his joy in check (*Rubish,* 1).

and regrets, and keeps his soul in a kind of constant trepidation that leads him to change plans and places at every moment.

If the taste for material well being is joined with a social state in which neither law nor custom any longer holds anyone in his place, it is one more great excitement to this restlessness of spirit; you will then see men continually change path, for fear of missing the shortest road that is to lead them to happiness.

It is easy to understand, moreover, that if the men who passionately seek material enjoyments do desire strongly, they must be easily discouraged; since the final goal is to enjoy, the means to get there must be quick and easy, otherwise the difficulty of obtaining the enjoyment would surpass the enjoyment. So most souls are at the same time ardent and soft, violent and enervated. Often death is less feared than constant efforts toward the same goal.

Equality leads by a still more direct road toward several of the effects that I have just described.

When all the prerogatives of birth and fortune are destroyed, when all the professions are open to everyone, and when you can reach the summit of each one of them on your own, an immense and easy career seems to open before the ambition of men, and they readily imagine that they are called to great destinies.[f] But that is an erroneous view that experience corrects every day. The same equality that allows each citizen to conceive vast hopes makes all citizens individually weak. It limits their strengths on all sides, at the same time that it allows their desires to expand.

Not only are they powerless by themselves, but also they find at each step immense obstacles that they had not at first noticed.

They destroyed the annoying privileges of a few of their fellows; they encounter the competition of all. The boundary marker has changed form rather than place. When men are more or less similar and follow the same road, it is very difficult for any one of them to march quickly and cut through the uniform crowd that surrounds and crushes him.

f. In the margin: "<This idea must *necessarily* be found in the chapter on ambition. Do not let it *appear* without reviewing both of them at the same time.>"

This constant opposition that reigns between the instincts given birth by equality and the means that equality provides to satisfy them torments and fatigues souls.[g]

You can imagine men having arrived at a certain degree of liberty that satisfies them entirely. They then enjoy their independence without restlessness and without fervor. But men will never establish an equality that is enough for them.

Whatever efforts a people may make, it will not succeed in making conditions perfectly equal within it; and if it had the misfortune to arrive at this absolute and complete leveling, there would still be inequality of intelligence that, coming directly from God, will always escape the laws.

No matter how democratic the social state and political constitution of a people, you can therefore count on each of its citizens always seeing near himself several points that are above him, and you can predict that he will obstinately turn his attention solely in their direction. When inequality is the common law of a society, the greatest inequalities do not strike the eye. When all is nearly level, the least inequalities offend it. This is why the desire for equality always becomes more insatiable as equality is greater.[h]

Among democratic peoples, men easily gain a certain equality; they cannot attain the equality they desire. The latter retreats from them every day, but without ever hiding from their view, and by withdrawing, it draws them in pursuit. They constantly believe that they are about to grasp it, and it constantly escapes their grip. They see it close enough to know its charms, they do not come close enough to enjoy it, and they die before having fully savored its sweet pleasures.

It is to these causes that you must attribute the singular melancholy that the inhabitants of democratic countries often reveal amid their abundance, and this disgust for life that sometimes comes to seize them in the middle of a comfortable and tranquil existence.

Some complain in France that the number of suicides is growing; in

g. The four paragraphs that follow do not appear in the manuscript.

h. "<Envy is a sentiment that develops strongly *only among equals,* that is why it is so common and so ardent in democratic centuries>" (*Rubish,* 1).

America suicide is rare, but we are assured that insanity is more common than anywhere else.

These are different symptoms of the same disease.

Americans do not kill themselves, however agitated they are, because religion forbids them to so do, and because among them materialism does not so to speak exist, although the passion for material well-being is general.

Their will resists, but often their reason gives way.[j]

In democratic times enjoyments are more intense than in aristocratic centuries, and above all the number of those who sample them is infinitely greater; but on the other hand, it must be recognized that hopes and desires are more often disappointed there, souls more excited and more restless, and anxieties more burning.[k]

j. To the side: "<Perhaps remove all of this as too strong.>"

k. Men of democracies are tormented by desires more immense and more unlimited than those of all other men. Their desires generally lead them however to less sustained, less energetic, less persevering actions. The desires have enough power over them to agitate them, to make them lose hope, and not enough to lead them to these great and persevering efforts that bring great and enduring results. They have enough desires to become disgusted with life and to kill themselves, not enough to overcome themselves and to prevail, live and act. They have constantly recurring weak desires, rather than will.

Examine this phenomenon very closely and portray it, probably in the chapter entitled *of restlessness of the heart,* which comes after *material enjoyments,* true cause of what precedes.

12 March 1838 (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 14[a]

How the Taste for Material Enjoyments Is United, among the Americans, with the Love of Liberty and Concern for Public Affairs

When a democratic State[b] turns to absolute monarchy, the activity that was brought previously to public and private affairs comes suddenly to be concentrated on the latter, and a great material prosperity results for some time; but soon the movement slows and the development of production stops.[c]

a. Liberty is useful for the production of well-being among all peoples, but principally among democratic peoples.

It often happens among these peoples, however, that the excessive taste for well-being causes liberty to be abandoned.

Men there are so preoccupied by their petty private affairs that they regard the attention that they give to great public affairs as a waste of time. That delivers them easily to the despotism of one man or to the tyranny of a party. The Americans offer the opposite example. They concern themselves with public affairs attentively and with the same ardor as with their private interests, which shows clearly that in their mind these two things go together (YTC, CVf, p. 32).

b. The manuscript says "republic."

c. I said in another part of this work the reasons that led me to believe that, if despotism came to be established in a lasting way among a democratic people, it would show itself more ordered and *heavier* than anywhere else. The more I advance into my subject, the more it seems to me that I am finding new reasons to think so.

[In the margin: All of that is weak because these are general truths that do not apply to democratic peoples more than to others. It is the *special* reasons that I must seek.

The *special* reason here would be the *particularly* suffocating nature of despotism among democratic peoples.]

Now, the necessary effect of a despotism of this type is to constrict the imagination of man, to narrow in all ways the limits of his faculties and finally to make him indifferent and as if useless to himself. But perhaps I am exaggerating the danger. Who could believe in such excesses amid the enlightenment of our {Europe} age? So it is claimed. I agree, so I will not speak about the wars undertaken for a particular interest, the misappropriations of public wealth, the plundering by the agents of power, the general uncertainty of private fortunes, things still more fatal to the prosperity of citizens, that are like the usual consequence of the establishment of such a government and whose effect will soon make itself felt on the well-being of the citizens. All these things can be considered as accidents. I want to seek a permanent cause of the evil that I suppose, and I imagine a soft and intelligent despotism that, limiting itself to confiscating liberty, leaves men in possession of all the goods given birth by liberty.

[In the margin: Commerce cannot bear *war;* but the character of democratic despotism is not tyrannical, but minutely detailed and annoying.]

Some maintain that such a government {favors} would save human morality and is, everything considered, more favorable to happiness; I do not believe it. Nonetheless, it can be claimed. But you certainly cannot claim that such a government favors as well the development of material well-being and the acquisition of wealth.

There is a more intimate connection than is thought between political activity and industrial activity. There is nothing that awakens the imagination of a people, that expands the circle of its ideas, that gives it the taste for enterprises of all types and the boldness to execute them, finally that forces citizens to see each other and to enlighten each other mutually with their knowledge, like the concern for public affairs. Men being so disposed, there is no progress that they do not imagine, and, from the simultaneous efforts of all, universal well-being is born.

That is so true that I do not know if you can cite the example of a single manufacturing and commercial people, from the Tyrians to the English, who have not been at the same time a free people. You saw the industrial genius of the Florentines do wonders amid the constantly recurring revolutions that devoured the products of the work of man as they came from his hands. Florence, amid the very excesses of its independence, was rich; it became poor as soon as it wanted to rest under the tranquil and regular government [v: despotism] of the Medicis. So there is a hidden but very close bond between these two things: liberty and industry.[1]

[To the side: Perhaps do not speak about the Florentines, already cited by others on analogous occasions.]

You do not notice this at first. When the absolute authority of a prince follows the government of all, this great human activity that went toward public affairs and private affairs suddenly finds itself concentrated on the second, and for a time, a prodigious impetus and an unparalleled prosperity usually result. But soon movement slows. New ideas cease to circulate with the same rapidity. Men only communicate with each other from time to time, cease counting on their fellows, and end by no longer having confidence in themselves. No longer having the habit or the right to

I do not know if you can cite a single manufacturing and commercial people, from the Tyrians to the Florentines and to the English, who have not been a free people. So there is a close bond and a necessary connection between these two things: liberty and industry.

That is generally true of all nations, but especially of democratic nations.

I showed above how men who live in centuries of equality had a continual need for association in order to obtain nearly all the goods they covet, and on the other hand, I showed how great political liberty perfected and spread widely within their midst the art of association. So liberty, in these centuries, is particularly useful for the production of wealth. You can see, on the contrary, that despotism is particularly the enemy of the production of wealth.

The nature of absolute power, in democratic centuries, is neither cruel nor savage, but it is minutely detailed and irksome. A despotism of this type, although it does not trample humanity underfoot, is directly opposed to the genius of commerce and to the instincts of industry.

Thus the men of democratic times need to be free, in order to obtain more easily the material enjoyments for which they are constantly yearning.

It sometimes happens, however, that the excessive taste that they conceive for these very enjoyments delivers them to the first master who presents himself. The passion for well-being then turns against itself and, without noticing, drives away the object of its desires.

act in common in principal matters, they lose as well the practice of associating for secondary ends. The ardor for enterprises becomes dull, the taste for progress becomes less intense. Society marches at first with a more tranquil step, then it stops and finally settles into a complete immobility.

1. To see again concerning this piece something analogous written in England in 1835 (*Rubish,* 1).

In notebook CVa, p. 4, with the date 3 August 1836, there is a copy of a fragment of a letter by Machiavelli on the danger of the streets of Rome during the night. In August 1836, Tocqueville spent his vacation in Switzerland and read Machiavelli's *History of Florence.* See Luc Monnier, "Tocqueville et la Suisse," in *Alexis de Tocqueville. Livre du centenaire* (Paris: CNRS, 1960), pp. 101–13.

There is, in fact, a very perilous transition in the life of democratic peoples.

When the taste for material enjoyments develops among one of these peoples more rapidly than enlightenment and the habits of liberty, there comes a moment when men are carried away, as if beyond themselves, by the sight of these new goods that they are ready to grasp. Preoccupied by the sole concern to make a fortune, they no longer notice the close bond that unites the particular fortune of each one of them to the prosperity of all. There is no need to take away from such citizens the rights that they possess; they willingly allow them to escape. The exercise of their political rights seems to them a tiresome inconvenience that distracts them from their industry. Whether it is a matter of choosing their representatives, coming to the assistance of the authorities, dealing together with common affairs, they lack the time; they cannot waste such precious time on useless works. Those are games for idle men that are not suitable for grave men who are busy with the serious interests of life. The latter believe that they are following the doctrine of interest, but they have only a crude idea of it, and in order to see better to what they call their affairs, they neglect the principal one which is to remain their own masters.

Since the citizens who work do not want to think about public matters, and since the class that could fill its leisure hours by shouldering these concerns no longer exists, the place of the government is as though empty.

If, at this critical moment, a clever man of ambition comes to take hold of power, he finds that the path to all usurpations is open [<and he will have no difficulty turning against liberty the very passions developed or given birth by liberty>].

As long as he sees for a while that all material interests prosper, he will easily be discharged from the rest. Let him, above all, guarantee good order. Men who have a passion for material enjoyments usually find how the agitations of liberty disturb well-being, before noticing how liberty serves to gain it; and at the slightest noise of public passions that penetrates into the petty enjoyments of their private life, they wake up and become anxious; for a long time the fear of anarchy keeps them constantly in suspense and always ready to jump away from liberty at the first disorder.

I agree without difficulty that public peace is a great good, but I do not want to forget that it is through good order that all peoples have arrived at tyranny. It assuredly does not follow that peoples should scorn public peace; but it must not be enough for them. A nation that asks of its government only the maintenance of order is already a slave at the bottom of its heart. The nation is a slave of its well-being, and the man who is to put it in chains can appear.

The despotism of factions is to be feared no less than that of one man.

When the mass of citizens wants only to concern itself with private affairs, the smallest parties do not have to despair of becoming masters of public affairs.

It is then not rare to see on the world's vast stage, as in our theaters, a multitude represented by a few men. The latter speak alone in the name of the absent or inattentive crowd; alone they take action amid the universal immobility; they dispose of everything according to their caprice; they change laws and tyrannize mores at will; and you are astonished to see into what a small number of weak and unworthy hands a great people can fall.

Until now, the Americans have happily avoided all the pitfalls that I have just pointed out; and in that they truly merit our admiration.

There is perhaps no country on earth where you find fewer men of leisure than in America, and where all those who work are more inflamed in the pursuit of well-being. But if the passion of the Americans for material enjoyments is violent, at least it is not blind, and reason, powerless to moderate it, directs it.

An American is busy with his private interests as if he were alone in the world, and a moment later, he devotes himself to public matters as if he had forgotten his private interests. He seems sometimes animated by the most egotistical cupidity and sometimes by the most intense patriotism. The human heart cannot be divided in this manner. The inhabitants of the United States bear witness alternately to such a strong and so similar a passion for their well-being and for their liberty that it is to be believed that these passions unite and blend some place in their soul. The Americans, in fact, see in their liberty the best instrument and the greatest

guarantee of their well-being. They love both of these two things. So they do not think that getting involved in public matters is not their business; they believe, on the contrary, that their principal business is to secure by themselves a government that allows them to acquire the goods that they desire, and that does not forbid them to enjoy in peace those they have acquired.

CHAPTER 15[a]

How from Time to Time Religious Beliefs Divert the Soul of the Americans toward Non-Material Enjoyments[b]

[≠However animated the Americans are in the pursuit of well-being, there are moments when they stop and turn away for a moment to think about God and about the other life.≠]

In the United States, when the seventh day of each week arrives, commercial and industrial life seems suspended; all noise ceases. A profound rest, or rather a kind of solemn recollection follows; the soul, finally, regains self-possession and contemplates itself.

During this day, the places consecrated to commerce and industry are deserted; each citizen, surrounded by his children, goes to church; there strange discourses are held forth that do not seem much made for his ears. He hears about the innumerable evils caused by pride and covetousness.

a. In America, Sunday and the use made of it interrupt each week the course of purely material thoughts and tastes. It breaks the chain of them. Particular advantages of this.

The democratic social state leads the human mind toward materialistic opinions by sometimes developing beyond measure the taste for well-being. That is a tendency that you must struggle against, just as in aristocratic times you must fight against an opposite excess.

Effect of religions which is to keep spiritualism in honor. So religions are particularly necessary among democratic peoples. What the government of these peoples can do to uphold religions and the spiritualistic opinions that they suggest (YTC, CVf, pp. 32–33).

b. On the jacket of the chapter in the manuscript: "The utility of religions to temper the taste for material enjoyments in democratic centuries has already been *touched* upon in chapter V, but so lightly that I believe that it can be developed here." It concerns chapter V of the first part.

He is told about the necessity to control his desires, about the fine enjoyments attached to virtue alone, and about the true happiness that accompanies it.

Back at home, you do not see him run to his business ledgers. He opens the book of the Holy Scriptures; there he finds sublime or touching portrayals of the grandeur and the goodness of the Creator, of the infinite magnificence of the works of God, of the elevated destiny reserved for men, of their duties and their rights to immortality.

This is how, from time to time, the American escapes in a way from himself, and how, tearing himself away for a moment from the petty passions that agitate his life and from the transitory interests that fill it, he enters suddenly into an ideal world where everything is great, pure, eternal.

[So I am constantly led to the same subjects by different roads; and I discover more and more the close bond that unites the two parts of my subject.]

In another place in this work, I looked for the causes to which the maintenance of political institutions in America had to be attributed, and religion seemed to me one of the principal ones. Today, when I am concerned with individuals, I find religion again and notice that it is no less useful to each citizen than to the whole State.

The Americans show, by their practice, that they feel the entire necessity of moralizing democracy by religion. What they think in this regard about themselves is a truth that must penetrate every democratic nation.

I do not doubt that the social and political constitution of a people disposes them to certain beliefs and to certain tastes in which they easily abound afterward; while these same causes turn them away from certain opinions and certain tendencies without their working at it themselves, and so to speak without their suspecting it.

All the art of the legislator consists in clearly discerning in advance these natural inclinations of human societies, in order to know where the effort of the citizens must be aided, and where it would instead be necessary to slow it down. For these obligations differ according to the times. Only the end toward which humanity must always head is unchanging; the means to reach that end constantly vary.

[≠There are vices or erroneous opinions that can only be established

among a people by struggling against the general current of society. These are not to be feared; they must be considered as unfortunate accidents. But there are others that, having a natural rapport with the very constitution of the people, develop by themselves and effortlessly among the people. Those, however small they may be at their beginning and however rare they seem, deserve to attract the great care of the legislator.≠][c]

If I were born in an aristocratic century, amid a nation in which the hereditary wealth of some and the irremediable poverty of others diverted men from the idea of the better and, as well, held souls as if benumbed in the contemplation of another world, I would want it to be possible for me to stimulate among such a people the sentiment of needs; I would think about finding more rapid and easier means to satisfy the new desires that I would have brought about, and, diverting the greatest efforts of the human mind toward physical study, I would try to excite the human mind in the pursuit of well-being.[d]

If it happened that some men caught fire thoughtlessly in the pursuit of wealth and exhibited an excessive love for material enjoyments, I would not become alarmed; these particular traits would soon disappear in the common physiognomy.

Legislators of democracies have other concerns.

Give democratic peoples enlightenment and liberty and leave them alone. They will easily succeed in drawing from this world all the [material] goods that it can offer; they will perfect each one of the useful arts and daily make life more comfortable, easier, sweeter; their social state pushes them naturally in this direction. I am not afraid that they will stop.

c. In the margin: "≠To delete this piece perhaps which *slows,* although it clarifies. I have moreover expressed this idea in the first part while speaking about laws.≠"

d. If I had been born in the Middle Ages, I would have been the enemy of superstitions, for then the social movement led there.

But today, I feel indulgent toward all the follies that spiritualism can suggest.

The great enemy is materialism, not only because it is in itself a detestable doctrine, but also because it is unfortunately in accord with the social tendency (*Rubish,* 1).

But while man takes pleasure in this honest and legitimate pursuit of well-being, it is to be feared that in the end he may lose the use of his most sublime faculties, and that by wanting to improve everything around him, he may in the end degrade himself. The danger is there and nowhere else.

So legislators in democracies and all honest and enlightened men who live in democracies must apply themselves without respite to lifting up souls and keeping them pointed toward heaven. It is necessary that all those who are interested in the future of democratic societies unite, and that all in concert make continual efforts to spread within these societies the taste for the infinite, the sentiment for the grand and the love for non-material pleasures.

If among the opinions of a democratic people there exist a few of these harmful theories that tend to make you believe that everything perishes with the body, consider the men who profess them as the natural enemies of the people.

There are many things that offend me in the materialists. Their doctrines seem pernicious to me, and their pride revolts me. If their system could be of some use to man, it seems that it would be in giving him a modest idea of himself. But they do not show that this is so; and when they believe that they have sufficiently established that men are only brutes, they appear as proud as if they had demonstrated that men were gods.[e]

Materialism is, among all nations, a dangerous sickness of the human mind; but it must be particularly feared among a democratic people, because it combines marvelously with the vice of the heart most familiar to these people.

e. ≠Baden, 2 August 1836.
Of the pride of the materialists./
There are many things that shock me among the materialists, but the most displeasing in my view is the extreme pride that most of them exhibit. If the doctrine that they profess could be of some use to men, it seems that it would be in inspiring in them a modest idea of themselves and in leading them to humility. But they do not indicate that this is so, and after making a thousand efforts to prove that they are only brutes, they show themselves as proud as if they had demonstrated that they were gods≠" (In the *rubish* of chapter XVII of this part. *Rubish,* 1).

Democracy favors the taste for material enjoyments. This taste, if it becomes excessive, soon disposes men to believe that everything is only matter; and materialism, in turn, finally carries them with an insane fervor toward these same enjoyments. Such is the fatal circle into which democratic nations are pushed. It is good that they see the danger and restrain themselves.

Most religions are only general, simple and practical means to teach men the immortality of the soul. That is the greatest advantage that a democratic people draws from belief, and what makes these beliefs more necessary for such a people than for all others.

So when no matter which religion has put down deep roots within a democracy, be careful about weakening it; but instead protect it carefully as the most precious heritage of aristocratic centuries;[f] do not try to tear men away from their ancient religious opinions in order to substitute new ones, for fear that, during the transition from one faith to another, when the soul finds itself for one moment devoid of beliefs, love of material enjoyments comes to spread and fill the soul entirely.

[I do not believe that all religions are equally true and equally good, but I think that there is none so false or so bad that it would not still be advantageous for a democratic people to profess.]

Assuredly, metempsychosis is not more reasonable than materialism; but if it were absolutely necessary for a democracy to make a choice between the two, I would not hesitate, and I would judge that its citizens risk becoming brutalized less by thinking that their soul is going to pass into the body of a pig than by believing that it is nothing.[g]

The belief in a non-material and immortal principle, united for a time to matter, is so necessary for the grandeur of man, that it still produces beautiful effects even when you do not join the opinion of rewards and punishments with it and when you limit yourself to believing that after

f. To the side: "{Remark by Édouard.}"

g. In the margin: "≠It is above all from there that the piece becomes *weak* because what I say no longer relates exclusively to democracies./

"What follows is a beautiful digression on the general advantages of spiritualisms and nothing more, thrown across the idea of the utility of a religion and of the means for preserving it.≠"

death the divine principle contained in man is absorbed in God or goes to animate another creature.[h]

Even the latter consider the body as the secondary and inferior portion of our nature; and they scorn it even when they undergo its influence; while they have a natural esteem and secret admiration for the non-material part of man, even though they sometimes refuse to submit themselves to its dominion. This is enough to give a certain elevated turn to their ideas and their tastes, and to make them tend without interest, and as if on their own, toward pure sentiments and great thoughts.

It is not certain that Socrates and his school had well-fixed opinions on what must happen to man in the other life; but the sole belief on which they were settled, that the soul has nothing in common with the body and survives it, was enough to give to platonic philosophy the sort of sublime impulse that distinguishes it.

When you read Plato, you notice that in the times prior to him and in his time, many writers existed who advocated materialism. These writers have not survived to our time or have survived only very incompletely. It has been so in nearly all the centuries; most of the great literary reputations are joined with spiritualism. The instinct and the taste of humanity uphold this doctrine; they often save this doctrine despite the men themselves and make the names of those who are attached to it linger on. So it must not be believed that in any time, and in whatever political state, the passion for material enjoyments and the opinions that are linked with it will be able

h. Immortality of the soul./

The need for the *infinite* and the sad experience of the *finite* that we encounter at each step, torments [*sic*] me sometimes, but does not distress me. I see in it one of the greatest proofs of the existence of another world and of the immortality of our souls. From all that we know about God by his works, we know that he does nothing without a near or distant end. This is so true that in the physical world, it is enough for us to find an organ in order to conclude from it in a certain way that the animal that possessed this organ used it in this or that way, and experience comes to prove it. Argument by analogy. I cannot believe that God put in our souls the *organ* of the infinite, if I can express myself in this way, in order to give our soul eternally only to the *finite,* that he gave it the *organ* of hope in a future life, without future life (CVa, p. 57).

to suffice for an entire people.[j] The heart of man is more vast than you suppose; it can at the same time enclose the taste for the good things of the earth and the love of the good things of heaven; sometimes the heart seems to give itself madly to one of the two; but it never goes for a long time without thinking of the other.[k]

j. In a first version you read:

I am moreover very far from believing that men can[not (ed.)] reconcile the taste for well-being that democracy develops and the religious [v: spiritualistic] beliefs that democracy needs. To prove it, I will not use the example of the Americans; their origin sets them aside. But I will cite before all the others that of the English.

The middle classes of England form an immense democracy in which each man is occupied without respite with the concern of improving his lot, and in which all seem devoted to the love of wealth. But the middle classes of England remain faithful to their religious beliefs and they show in a thousand small ways that these beliefs are powerful and sincere [v: true]. England, with its traditions and its memories, is not however relegated to a corner of the universe. Unbelief is next door. The English themselves have seen several of the most celebrated unbelievers arise within it. But the middle classes of England have remained firmly religious until today and are sincere Christians who have produced these industrial wonders that astonish the world.

So the heart of man is . . . (*Rubish,* 1).

A variant from the *Rubish* specifies: "unbelievers. Several have been powerful because of their genius. Hume, Gibbon, Byron" (*Rubish,* 1).

k. To be concerned only with satisfying the needs of the body and to forget about the soul. That is the final outcome to which materialism leads.

To flee into the deserts, to inflict sufferings and privations on yourself in order to live the life of the soul. That is the final outcome of spiritualism. I notice at the one end of this tendency Heliogabalus and at the other St. Jerome.

I would very much want us to be able to find between these two paths a road that would not be a route toward the one or toward the other. For if each of these two opposite roads can be suitable for some men, this middle road is the only one that can be suitable for humanity. Can we not find a path between Heliogabalus and St. Jerome? (*Rubish,* 1).

At another place in the *rubish:*

I proved sufficiently in material tastes that it was to be desired that the taste for well-being did not repress the impulses [of (ed.)] spiritualism of the soul, were it only so that man could obtain for himself those material enjoyments that they [*sic*] desire.

For the subject to be exhausted and my philosophical position clearly established, it would be necessary to be able to add a *small* chapter in which, turning myself away from considering the *fanatical* spiritualists, I would show that in the very interest of

If it is easy to see that, particularly in times of democracy, it is important to make spiritual opinions reign, it is not easy to say what those who govern democratic peoples must do for those opinions to reign.

I do not believe in the prosperity any more than in the duration of official philosophies, and as for State religions, I have always thought that if sometimes they could temporarily serve the interests of political power, they always sooner or later become fatal to the Church.

Nor am I one of those who judge that in order to raise religion in the eyes of the people, and to honor the spiritualism that religion professes, it is good to grant indirectly to its ministers a political influence that the law refuses to them.

[I would even prefer that you gave the clergy a definite power than to allow them to hold an irregular and hidden power. For, in the first case,

the soul the body must prosper; I would *rehabilitate the flesh* as the Saint-Simonians said. I would search for this intermediate path between Saint Jerome and Heliogabalus that will always be the great route of humanity.

I would show there

1. That in order to get men to concern themselves with the *needs* of their souls, you must not say to them to neglect the *needs* of the body, for both exist, man being neither a pure *spirit* nor an *animal,* but that the problem to solve is to find a means to reconcile these two needs.

2. *That in itself* it is desirable that sublime virtues do not hide under rags (or at least exceptions that show nothing), that a certain well-being of the body is necessary for the development of the soul, that efforts made by the soul to attain that development are healthy for it, that they give it habits of order, work, that they sharpen its abilities . . ./

In a word, it is necessary to tie this world to the other or one of the two escapes us (*Rubish,* 1).

In a letter of 1843, Tocqueville will repeat the same ideas to Arthur de Gobineau:

> Our society has moved away much more from theology than from Christian philosophy. Since our religious beliefs have become less firm and the view of the other world more obscure, morality must show itself more indulgent for material needs and pleasures. It is an idea that the Saint-Simonians expressed, I believe, by saying that it *was necessary to rehabilitate the flesh* (*Correspondance avec Gobineau, OC,* IX, p. 46).

See Joshua Mitchell, *The Fragility of Freedom. Tocqueville on Religion, Democracy and the American Future* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

you at least see clearly the political circle in which priests can act; while in the other, there are no limits at which the imagination of the people must stop, or public misfortunes for which the people will not be tempted to blame the priests.][m]

I feel so convinced of the nearly inevitable dangers that beliefs run when their interpreters mingle in public affairs, and I am so persuaded that Christianity must at all cost be maintained within the new democracies, that I would prefer to chain priests within the sanctuary than to allow them out of it.

So what means remain for authority to lead men back toward spiritualistic opinions or keep them in the religion that suggests these opinions?

What I am going to say is going to do me harm in the eyes of politicians. I believe that the only effective means that governments can use to honor the dogma of the immortality of the soul is to act each day as if they believed it themselves; and I think that it is only by conforming scrupulously to religious morality in great affairs that they can claim to teach citizens to know, love and respect religious morality in little affairs.[n]

m. In the *rubish,* the passage continues in this way: "It is rare moreover that you wisely use a precarious and disputed power that you can exercise only in the shadows. For me, I am so persuaded that the spirit of religion must at all cost be maintained within democracies and I feel, on the contrary, so convinced of the nearly inevitable dangers . . ." (*Rubish,* 1).

n. To put after egoism and the material tendency of democracy, when I will say that it is necessary at all cost to throw some non-material ideas, some poetry, some taste for the infinite into the midst of democratic peoples.

Legislators of democracy, if by chance a positive religion exists, respect it, preserve it as a precious flame that is tending to go out, as the most precious heritage of aristocratic centuries . . .

In aristocratic centuries I would work hard to turn the human spirit toward physical studies, in democratic centuries toward the moral sciences. Draw a short parallel between these two tendencies against which you must alternately struggle in order to reveal clearly the higher place at which I position myself and show that I am not a slave to my own ideas (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 16[a]

How the Excessive Love of Well-Being Can Harm Well-Being[b]

There is more of a connection than you think between the perfection of the soul and the improvement of the goods of the body; man can leave these two things distinct and alternately envisage each one of them; but he cannot separate them entirely without finally losing sight of both of them.

Animals have the same senses that we have and more or less the same desires: there are no material passions that we do not have in common with them and whose germ is not found in a dog as well as in ourselves.

So why do the animals only know how to provide for their first and most crude needs, while we infinitely vary our enjoyments and increase them constantly?

What makes us superior in this to animals is that we use our soul to find the material goods toward which their instinct alone leads them. With man, the angel teaches the brute the art of satisfying himself. Man is capable of rising above the goods of the body and even of scorning life, an idea animals

a. "It is the soul that teaches the body the art of satisfying itself. You cannot neglect the one up to a certain point without decreasing the means to satisfy the other" (YTC, CVf, p. 33).

b. "The perfection of the soul serves not only to find new means to satisfy the body, but it also increases the ability that the body has to enjoy.

Idea of L[ouis (ed.)].

"I am persuaded in fact that a man of spirit, imagination, genius, feels material enjoyments a thousand times more when he gives himself to them than a fool, a dull or coarse being" (*Rubish,* 1).

do not even conceive; he therefore knows how to multiply these very advantages to a degree that they also cannot imagine.

Everything that elevates, enlarges, expands the soul, makes it more capable of succeeding at even those enterprises that do not concern it.

Everything that enervates the soul, on the contrary, or lowers it, weakens it for all things, the principal ones as well as the least ones, and threatens to make it almost as powerless for the first as for the second. Thus, the soul must remain great and strong, if only to be able, from time to time, to put its strength and its greatness at the service of the body.

If men ever succeed in being content with material goods, it is to be believed that they would little by little lose the art of producing them, and that they would end by enjoying them without discernment and without progress, like the animals.

CHAPTER 17[a]

How, in Times of Equality and Doubt, It Is Important to Push Back the Goal of Human Actions[b]

In centuries of faith, the final aim of life is placed after life.

So men of those times, naturally and so to speak without wanting to, become accustomed to contemplating over a long period of years an unchanging goal toward which they march constantly, and they learn, by taking imperceptible steps forward, to repress a thousand small passing desires, the better to arrive at the satisfaction of this great and permanent desire that torments them. When the same men want to concern themselves with

a. In centuries of faith, men become accustomed to directing all of their actions in this world with the other in view.

That gives them certain habits and leads them as well to set for themselves very distant goals in life and to march toward them obstinately.

In centuries of unbelief, on the contrary, men are naturally led to want to think only about the next day.

So the great matter for philosophers and for those who govern in the centuries of unbelief and democracy must be to push back the goal of human affairs in the eyes of men. Means that they can use to succeed in doing so (YTC, CVf, pp. 33–34).

b. On the jacket of the *rubish:*

How, in centuries of democracy and doubt, all the effort of the social power must tend toward again giving men the taste for the future./

After *all* the chapters on material enjoyments. Democratic peoples have a general taste for easy and quick enjoyments. That is true of material enjoyments as well as others. So this idea must be treated separately from that of material enjoyments, but it must be treated after, because the predominance of the taste for *material* enjoyments is a great cause of the preeminence of the general taste for current enjoyments (*Rubish,* 1).

earthly things, these habits recur. They readily set for their actions here below a general and certain goal, toward which all their efforts are directed. You do not see them give themselves each day to new attempts; but they have settled plans that they do not grow weary of pursuing.

This explains why religious peoples[c] have often accomplished such enduring things. By concerning themselves with the other world, they found the great secret of succeeding in this one.

Religions give the general habit of behaving with the future in view. In this they are no less useful to happiness in this life than to felicity in the other. It is one of their great political dimensions.

But, as the light of faith grows dim, the view of men narrows; and you would say that each day the goal of human actions appears closer to them.

Once they become accustomed to no longer being concerned about what must come after their life, you see them fall easily back into that complete and brutal indifference about the future that is only too suited to certain instincts of the human species. As soon as they have lost the custom of putting their principal hopes in the long run, they are naturally led to wanting to realize their slightest desires without delay, and it seems that, from the moment they lose hope of living eternally, they are disposed to act as if they had only a single day to exist.

In the centuries of unbelief, it is therefore always to be feared that men will constantly give themselves to the daily whims of their desires and that, renouncing entirely what cannot be acquired without long efforts, they will establish nothing great, peaceful and lasting.

If it happens that, among a people so disposed, the social state becomes democratic, the danger that I am pointing out increases.

[<In aristocracies, the fixity of conditions and the immobility of the social body direct the human mind toward the idea of the future and hold it there.>]

When each man seeks constantly to change place, when an immense competition is open to all, when wealth accumulates and disappears in a few moments amid the tumult of democracy, the idea of a sudden and easy fortune, of great possessions easily gained and lost, the image of chance in

c. The manuscript says: "most religious peoples."

all its forms occurs to the human mind. The instability of the social state comes to favor the natural instability of desires. In the middle of these perpetual fluctuations of fate, the present grows; it hides the future that fades away, and men want to think only about the next day.

In these countries where by an unhappy coincidence irreligion and democracy meet, philosophers and those governing must apply themselves constantly to pushing back the goal of human actions in the eyes of men; that is their great concern.

While enclosing himself within the spirit of his century and his country, the moralist must learn to defend himself. May he try hard each day to show his contemporaries how, even amid the perpetual movement that surrounds them, it is easier than they suppose to conceive and to carry out long-term enterprises. May he make them see that, even though humanity has changed appearance, the methods by which men can obtain the prosperity of this world have remained the same, and that, among democratic peoples, as elsewhere, it is only by resisting a thousand small particular everyday desires that you can end up satisfying the general passion for happiness that torments.

The task of those who govern is not less marked out.

At all times it is important that those who govern nations conduct themselves with a view toward the future. But that is still more necessary in democratic and unbelieving centuries than in all others. By acting in this way, the leaders of democracies not only make public affairs prosper, but by their example they also teach individuals the art of conducting private affairs.

Above all they must try hard to banish chance, as much as possible, from the political world.

The sudden and unmerited elevation of a courtier produces only a passing impression in an aristocratic country, because the ensemble of institutions and beliefs usually forces men to move slowly along paths that they cannot leave.

But nothing is more pernicious than such examples offered to the view of a democratic people. Such examples end by hurrying the heart of a democratic people down a slope along which everything is dragging it. So it is principally in times of skepticism and equality that you must carefully avoid

having the favor of the people, or that of the prince, granted or denied by chance, take the place of knowledge and services. It is to be hoped that every advance there appears to be the fruit of effort, so that there is no overly easy greatness, and that ambition is forced to set its sights on the goal for a long time before achieving it.

Governments must apply themselves to giving back to men this taste for the future that is no longer inspired by religion and the social state; and without saying so, they must teach citizens every day in a practical way that wealth, fame, and power are the rewards of work; that great successes are found at the end of long desires, and that nothing lasting is gained except what is acquired with pain.

When men become accustomed to foreseeing from a great distance what must happen to them here below, and to finding nourishment in hopes, it becomes difficult for them always to stop their thinking at the precise limits of life, and they are very close to going beyond those limits in order to cast their sight farther.

So I do not doubt that by making citizens accustomed to thinking about the future in this world, you lead them closer little by little, and without their knowing it, to religious beliefs.

Thus, the means that, to a certain point, allows men to do without religion, is perhaps, after all, the only one that remains to us for leading humanity back by a long detour toward faith.

CHAPTER 18[a]

Why, among the Americans, All Honest Professions Are Considered Honorable[b]

Among democratic peoples, where there is no hereditary wealth, each man works in order to live, or has worked, or is born from people who have worked. So the idea of work, as the necessary, natural and honest condition of humanity, presents itself on all sides to the human mind.

Not only is work not held in dishonor among these peoples, it is honored; prejudice is not against work, it is for it. In the United States, a rich man believes that he owes to public opinion the consecration of his leisure to some industrial or commercial operation or to some public duties. He would consider himself of bad reputation if he used his life only for living. It is to avoid this obligation to work that so many rich Americans come to Europe; there, they find the remnants of aristocratic societies among which idleness is still honored.

Equality not only rehabilitates the idea of work, it boosts the idea of work that gains a profit.

a. In America everyone works or has worked. That rehabilitates the idea of work. In America, since fortunes are all mediocre and temporary, the idea of salary is strongly joined with the idea of work.

From the moment when work is honorable and when all work is paid, all professions take on a family resemblance. The salary is a common feature that is found in the physiognomy of all professions (YTC, CVf, p. 34).

b. This chapter and the following, until the end of the second part, do not exist in the manuscript, but appear in notebook CVf. There is *rubish* with the title: "(a. b. c.) Rubish./ WHY DEMOCRACY PUSHES MEN TOWARD COMMERCE AND ALL TYPES OF INDUSTRY AND IN GENERAL TOWARD THE TASTE FOR MATERIAL WELL-BEING. INSTINCTS THAT FOLLOW." There is also *rubish* for the chapter on the industrial aristocracy.

In aristocracies, it is not precisely work that is scorned, it is work for profit. Work is glorious when ambition or virtue alone brings it about. Under aristocracy, however, it constantly happens that the man who works for honor is not insensitive to the allure of gain. But those two desires meet only in the depths of his soul. He takes great care to hide from all eyes the place where they come together. He willingly hides it from himself. In aristocratic countries, there are hardly any public officials who do not pretend to serve the State without interest. Their salary is a detail that they sometimes think little about and that they always pretend not to think about at all.

Thus, the idea of gain remains distinct from that of work. In vain are they joined in point of fact; the past separates them.

In democratic societies, these two ideas are, on the contrary, always visibly united. Since the desire for well-being is universal, since fortunes are mediocre and temporary, since each man needs to increase his resources or to prepare new ones for his children, everyone sees very clearly that gain is, if not wholly, at least partially what leads them to work. Even those who act principally with glory in view get inevitably accustomed to the idea that they are not acting solely for this reason, and they discover, whatever they may say, that the desire to live combines in them with the desire to make their life illustrious.

From the moment when, on the one hand, work seems to all citizens an honorable necessity of the human condition, and when, on the other hand, work is always visibly done, in whole or in part, out of consideration for a salary, the immense space that separated the different professions in aristocratic societies disappears. If the professions are not always similar, they at least have a similar feature.

There is no profession in which work is not done for money. The salary, which is common to all, gives all a family resemblance.

This serves to explain the opinions that the Americans entertain concerning the various professions.

American servants do not believe themselves degraded because they work; for around them, everyone works. They do not feel debased by the idea that they receive a salary; for the President of the United States

also works for a salary. He is paid to command, just as they are paid to serve.

In the United States, professions are more or less difficult, more or less lucrative, but they are never noble or base. Every honest profession is honorable.

CHAPTER 19[a]

What Makes Nearly All Americans Tend toward Industrial Professions

I do not know if, of all the useful arts, agriculture is not the one that improves most slowly among democratic nations. Often you would even say that it is stationary, because several of the other useful arts seem to race ahead.

On the contrary, nearly all the tastes and habits that arise from equality lead men naturally toward commerce and industry.[b]

I picture an active, enlightened, free man, comfortably well-off, full of desires. He is too poor to be able to live in idleness; he is rich enough to feel above the immediate fear of need, and he thinks about bettering his lot. This man has conceived the taste for material enjoyments; a thousand

a. Democracy not only multiplies the number of workers among different labors, it makes men chose those of commerce and industry.
Nearly all the passions that arise from equality lead in this direction.
Love of material enjoyments.
Desire to enjoy quickly.
Love of games of chance.
In democratic countries, the rich themselves are constantly carried toward these careers. Democracy diverts them from politics. It makes commerce and industry into the most brilliant objects. In democratic countries the rich are always afraid of declining in wealth. Example of the Americans (YTC, CVf, p. 35).

b. *Action.* Equality of conditions leads men toward commerce.
(Idea of L[ouis (ed.)].)
Reaction. Commercial habits, type of commercial morality favorable to the government of democracy. Repress all the overly violent passions of temperaments. No anger, compromise, complicated and compromising [*sic*] interests in times of revolution (*Rubish,* 1).

others abandon themselves to this taste before his eyes; he has begun to give himself to it, and he burns to increase the means to satisfy it more. But life passes, time presses. What is he going to do?

For his efforts, cultivation of the earth promises nearly certain, but slow results. In that way you become rich only little by little and with difficulty. Agriculture is suitable only for the rich who already have a great excess, or for the poor who ask only to live. His choice is made: he sells his field, leaves his home and goes to devote himself to some risky, but lucrative profession.[c]

Now, democratic societies abound in men of this type; and as equality of conditions becomes greater, their number increases.

So democracy not only multiplies the number of workers; it leads men to one work rather than another; and, while it gives them a distaste for agriculture, it directs them toward commerce and industry.[1]

This spirit reveals itself among the richest citizens themselves.

c. Of all the means, the most energetic that you can use to push men exclusively toward love of wealth is the establishment of an aristocracy founded solely on money.

Nearly all the desires that can agitate the human heart are combined in the love of wealth, which becomes like the generative passion and which is seen among the others like the trunk of the tree that supports all the branches.

The taste for money and the ardor for power are then mingled so well in the soul, that it becomes difficult to discern if it is for ambition that men are greedy, or for greed that they are ambitious.

That is what happens in England where someone wants to be rich in order to achieve honors and where someone desires honors as evidence of wealth (*Rubish,* 1).

1. *It has been noted several times that men of industry and men of commerce possessed an immoderate taste for material enjoyments, and commerce and industry were blamed for that; I believe that here the effect has been taken for the cause.*

It is not commerce and industry that suggest the taste for material enjoyments to men, but rather this taste leads men toward industrial and commercial careers, where they hope to be satisfied more completely and more quickly.

If commerce and industry increase the desire for well-being, that results from the fact that every passion becomes stronger as it is exercised more, and grows with all the efforts that you make to satisfy it. All the causes that make the love of the goods of this world predominate in the human heart develop industry and commerce. Equality is one of these causes. It favors commerce, not directly by giving men the taste for trade, but indirectly, by strengthening and generalizing in their souls the love of well-being.

In democratic countries, a man, however wealthy he is assumed to be, is almost always discontent with his fortune, because he finds himself not as rich as his father and is afraid that his sons will not be as rich as he. So most of the rich in democracies constantly dream about the means to acquire wealth, and they naturally turn their sights toward commerce and industry, which seem to them the quickest and most powerful means to gain it. On this point they share the instincts of the poor man without having his needs, or rather they are pushed by the most imperious of all needs: that of not declining.[d]

In aristocracies, the rich are at the same time those who govern. The

d. .-.-.-.- is not by chance that most aristocracies have shown themselves indifferent to the works of industry or enemies to its progress. Underneath prejudice, it is easy to discern something real, which is like its seed.

Commerce often has admirable results in view, but it almost always uses very petty means to attain them.

In aristocracies, it is the same men who have wealth and who hold power, and their business is as much to direct public fortune as to look after their own. Preoccupied by these great matters, they can only with difficulty turn their mind to the run of small affairs that make up commerce, as well as to the minute and almost infinite concerns that commerce requires. So it is to be believed that they would see trade as a wearisome and secondary occupation and would neglect it even when they did not indeed consider it degrading. If some men were found among them who felt a natural taste for industry, they would carefully refrain from devoting themselves to it. For it is useless to resist the dominion of numbers, you never completely escape its yoke; and even within those aristocratic corps that refuse most stubbornly to acknowledge the rights of the national majority, there is a particular majority that governs.

With democracy the connection that united government and wealth disappears. The rich do not know what to do with their leisure; the restlessness of their desires, the extent of their resources, and the taste for great adventures [v: extraordinary things], which are almost always felt by men who stand in some way above the crowd, presses them to action. Only the road to commerce is open to them. In a democracy there is nothing greater or more brilliant than commerce. That is what attracts the attention and the prompting of the public; and all energetic passions are directed toward commerce. Nothing can keep the rich from devoting themselves to it, neither their own prejudices nor those of anyone else.

Since the great fortunes that are seen within a democracy almost always have a commercial origin, those who possess those fortunes have kept the habits or at least the traditions of trade. On the other hand, the rich never make up among a democratic people, as within aristocracies, a corps that has [interrupted text (ed.)] (*Rubish,* 1).

attention that they give constantly to great public affairs diverts them from the small concerns that commerce and industry demand. If the will of one of them is nonetheless directed by chance toward trade, the will of the aristocratic corps immediately bars the route to him; for it is useless to resist the dominion of numbers, you never completely escape its yoke; and, even within those aristocratic corps that refuse most stubbornly to acknowledge the rights of the national majority, there is a particular majority that governs.[2]

In democratic countries, where money does not lead the one who has it to power, but often keeps him away from it, the rich do not know what to do with their leisure.[e] Restlessness and the greatness of their desires, the extent of their resources, the taste for the extraordinary, which are almost always felt by those who stand, in whatever way, above the crowd, presses them to action. Only the road to commerce is open to them. In democracies, there is nothing greater or more brilliant than commerce; that is what attracts the attention of the public and fills the imagination of the crowd; all energetic passions are directed toward commerce. Nothing can prevent the rich from devoting themselves to it, neither their own prejudices, nor those of anyone else. The rich of democracies never form a corps that has its own mores and its own organization; the particular ideas of their class do not stop them, and the general ideas of their country push them. Since, moreover, the great fortunes that are seen within a democratic people almost always have a commercial origin, several generations must pass before those who possess those fortunes have entirely lost the habits of trade.[f]

2. *See the note at the end of the volume.*

e. *"England.*

"≠When it is not those who govern who are rich, but the rich who govern≠" (*Rubish,* 1).

f. Aristocracy of birth and pure democracy form two extremes of the social state of peoples.

In the middle is found the aristocracy of money. The latter is close to aristocracy of birth in that it confers on a small number of citizens great privileges. It fits into democracy in that these privileges can be successively acquired by all. It forms the natural transition between the two things, and you cannot say whether it is ending the rule of aristocracy on earth, or whether it is already opening the new era of democratic centuries (*Rubish,* 1).

Confined to the narrow space that politics leaves to them, the rich of democracies therefore throw themselves from all directions into commerce; there they can expand and use their natural advantages; and it is, in a way, by the very boldness and by the grandeur of their industrial enterprises that you must judge what little value they would have set on industry if they had been born within an aristocracy.

The same remark, moreover, is applicable to all the men of democracies, whether they are poor or rich.

Those who live amid democratic instability have constantly before their eyes the image of chance, and they end by loving all enterprises in which chance plays a role.

So they are all led toward commerce, not only because of the gain that it promises, but by love of the emotions that it gives.

The United States of America has only emerged for a half-century from the colonial dependence in which England held it; the number of great fortunes is very small there, and capital is still rare. But there is no people on earth who has made as rapid progress as the Americans in commerce and industry. They form today the second maritime nation of the world; and, although their manufacturing has to struggle against almost insurmountable natural obstacles, it does not fail to make new gains every day.

In the United States the greatest industrial enterprises are executed without difficulty, because the entire population is involved in industry, and because the poorest as well as the wealthiest citizen readily combine their efforts. So it is astonishing every day to see the immense works that are executed without difficulty by a nation that does not so to speak contain rich men. The Americans arrived only yesterday on the land that they inhabit, and they have already overturned the whole natural order to their profit. They have united the Hudson with the Mississippi and connected the Atlantic Ocean with the Gulf of Mexico, across more than five hundred leagues of the continent that separates these two seas. The longest railroads that have been constructed until now are in America.

But what strikes me most in the United States is not the extraordinary greatness of some industrial enterprises, it is the innumerable multitude of small enterprises.

Nearly all the farmers of the United States have combined some commerce with agriculture; most have made agriculture into a trade.

It is rare for an American farmer to settle forever on the land that he occupies. In the new provinces of the West principally, you clear a field in order to resell it and not to harvest it; you build a farm with the expectation that, since the state of the country is soon going to change due to the increase of inhabitants, you will be able to get a good price.

Every year, a swarm of inhabitants from the North descends toward the South and comes to live in the countries where cotton and sugar cane grow. These men cultivate the earth with the goal of making it produce in a few years what it takes to make them rich, and they already foresee the moment when they will be able to return to their country to enjoy the comfort gained in this way. So the Americans bring to agriculture the spirit of trade, and their industrial passions are seen there as elsewhere.

The Americans make immense progress in industry, because they are all involved in industry at the same time; and for the same reason, they are subject to very unexpected and very formidable industrial crises.

Since they are all engaged in commerce, commerce among them is subject to such numerous and so complicated influences that it is impossible to foresee in advance the difficulties that can arise. Since each one of them is more or less involved in industry, at the slightest shock that business experiences, all particular fortunes totter at the same time, and the State falters.[g]

I believe that the recurrence of industrial crises is an illness endemic among the democratic nations of our day.[h] It can be made less dangerous,

g. In the United States, everyone does commerce or has a portion of his fortune placed in commerce. Consequently, you see what is happening at this moment (May 1837) and what will perhaps result from it in the political world.

There is a great part of future humanity to which I must give my attention./

The Americans make immense progress in industry because they are all involved at the same time in industry, and for the same reason, they are subject to very unexpected and very formidable industrial crises (*Rubish,* 1).

h. [In the margin: I do not know if I should include this piece or where I should put it.]

but cannot be cured, because it is not due to an accident, but to the very temperament of these peoples.[j]

I have shown in this chapter how democracy served the developments of industry. I would have been able to show as well how industry in turn hastened the developments of democracy. For these two things go together and react on each other. Democracy gives birth to the taste for material enjoyments that pushes men toward industry, and industry creates a multitude of mediocre fortunes and develops within the very heart of aristocratic nations a separate class in which ranks are ill defined and poorly maintained, in which people rise and fall constantly, in which leisure is not enjoyed, a separate class whose instincts are all democratic. This class forms for a long time within the very heart of aristocratic nations a kind of small democracy that has its separate instincts, opinions, laws. As the people expands its commerce and its industry, this democratic class becomes more numerous and more influential; little by little its opinions pass into the mores and its ideas into the laws, until finally, having become predominant and so to speak unique, it takes hold of power and directs everything at its will and establishes democracy.

[To the side] All that badly digested (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 16–17).

j. Fragment of *rubish:*

OF THE RELATION THAT .-.-.- COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, ON THE ONE HAND, AND ON THE OTHER HAND, DEMOCRACY./

When you examine the direction that industry and democracy give to mores as well as to the minds of men, you are struck by the sight of the great similarity that exists between the effects produced by these two causes.

[In the margin: See in bundle A a good piece by Beaumont on that.]

I want to take as an example the matter that I am treating at this moment (June 1836) which is *the sciences, letters and the arts* (perhaps make good use of this general idea in the article on the sciences and on literature).

When men are engaged in the different commercial and industrial professions, their minds become accustomed to substituting in everything the idea of the useful for that of the beautiful, which leads them to cultivate the applied sciences rather than the theoretical sciences; inexpensive, elementary, productive literature for *finished,* refined literary works; useful building for beautiful monuments.

When conditions become equal and classes disappear, the same instincts arise. Except that instead of being felt by only one part of the nation, they are felt by the generality of citizens.

But these two causes are .-.-.-.-.- perceived separately.

I am first able to imagine very clearly a great industrial class in the middle of an aristocratic people. This class will have its own instincts; and if, as we have seen in England, it is influential in public affairs but without being master of them, it will give a portion of these instincts to all the other classes; and the nation, while keeping the social and political organization that characterizes an aristocracy, will show in part the tastes and the ideas that a democracy displays. This has happened to the English.

But here you will stop me and say: this industrial class is nothing other than a small democracy enclosed within a great aristocracy. Within it equality of conditions, the need to work, etc. reign, which do not reign in the larger society within which it is enclosed. When this class influences the opinions and ways of life of all the other classes, you have an incomplete democracy .-.-.-.- so you cannot cultivate industry without forming a small or large democratic society. When men cultivate industry, they are democratic, and when they are democratic, they necessarily cultivate industry.

I will answer that the men who are occupied with industry can be organized vis-à-vis each other very aristocratically. Which is what happens in a country in which industry is invariably directed by a small number of great capitalists who make the law and a multitude of workers who receive it. But both have nearly the same instincts, as regards the sciences, letters and the arts. So these instincts are due to the types of their occupations much more than to their social state, since the poor man and the rich man equally experience them.

[In the margin: The terms *industry, commerce* are too general. Make them more specific if I want to understand myself.]

From another perspective, could you not imagine a democracy, that is to say a people among whom conditions were more or less equal and among whom the taste for industry would not be found??/

All of this is looking for difficulties that do not exist.

.-.-.-.-.- the natural sequence of ideas.

When conditions are more or less equal among a people, there is naturally a great number of people who have a mediocre fortune, for [they (ed.)] are not so poor as to despair of bettering their lot and not so rich as to be satisfied with it. They will have enough well-being to know the attractions of well-being, not enough to content themselves with what they have. On the other hand, they will see a thousand ways to alleviate the material misfortunes that they feel, and the more they see the paths to deliver themselves from those misfortunes, the more impatiently will they bear them.

This class will be able to exist, to become strong and numerous among aristocratic nations themselves.[1] But in democracies, it will be dominant; it will be alone so to speak; it will make the laws and opinions.

Now it is clear that this class will be naturally concentrated on the taste for .-.-.-.-.- enjoyments, on all the instincts described above, and on commerce and industry at the same time. Commerce and industry are not the causes of these instincts, but on the contrary their products. What you can say is that commerce and industry increase these instincts, because every passion grows with all the efforts that you make to satisfy it and the more you concern yourself with it.

[To the side: As the number of mediocre fortunes increases and as the ease of making great fortunes grows, all of this more and more true. America.]

1. Here the example of England. This class that ends by giving its instincts to a people, but that cannot take the aristocratic form away from it. Particular causes such as liberty, maritime commerce, openings to national industries that give this class more intense tastes for well-being (*Rubish,* 1).

CHAPTER 20[a]

How Aristocracy Could Emerge from Industry[b]

a. Of the aristocratic make-up of some of the industries of today.

I showed how democracy favored the development of industry; I am going to show in what roundabout way industry in return leads back toward aristocracy.

It has been discovered in our time that when each worker was occupied only with the same detail, the work as a whole was more perfect.

It has been discovered as well that to do something with less expense, it is necessary to undertake it immediately on a very vast scale.

The first of the two discoveries lowers [v: ruins] and brutalizes the worker. The second constantly raises the master. They introduce the principles of aristocracy into the industrial class.

Now, as society in general becomes more democratic, since the need for inexpensive manufactured objects becomes more general and more intense, the two discoveries above apply more frequently and more rigorously.

So equality disappears from the small society as it becomes established in the large one (YTC, CVf, pp. 35–36).

Several ideas from this chapter come from the book of Viscount Alban de Villeneuve-Bargemont, *Économie politique chrétienne, ou recherches sur la nature et les causes du paupérisme, en France et en Europe . . .* (Paris: Paulin, 1834), 2 vols., which Tocqueville had used for his memoir on pauperism. Chapter XII of the first volume of Villeneuve-Bargemont's book has precisely this title, "The New Feudalism," and contains in germ the principal arguments of this chapter. See note s of p. 81 of the first volume.

b. I do not know where to place this chapter. Three systems:

1. It could perhaps be put in the first volume after the chapter that considers *equality* as the universal fact. It would show the exception and would complete the picture. In this case, it must perhaps be developed a bit.

2. It could perhaps be put before the chapter on salaries. In this case, it will have to be shortened.

3. I think, for the moment, that the best place would be after the chapter where I say that democracy pushes toward industrial careers. It would then be necessary to

I showed how democracy favored the development of industry and immeasurably multiplied the number of industrialists; we are going to see in what roundabout way industry in turn could well lead men toward aristocracy.

It has been recognized that when a worker is occupied every day only with the same detail, the general production of the work is achieved more easily, more rapidly and more economically.

It has been recognized as well that the more an industry was undertaken on a large scale, with great capital and large credit, the less expensive its products were.[c]

These truths have been seen dimly for a long time, but they have been demonstrated in our time. They are already applied to several very important industries, and the smallest industries are successively making use of them.

get into the matter a bit differently and bring out the link between this chapter and that which precedes. Something like this:

I said that democracy pushes men toward industry, and industry, such as it seems to want to be constituted today, tends to lead them back toward aristocracy./

Every society begins with aristocracy; industry is subject to this law (*Rubish,* 2).

c. In the margin, in the *rubish:* "<Now, these discoveries must be considered as the two sources from which aristocracy can escape once again to cover the world.> 2 July 1837" (*Rubish,* 2).

There is perhaps no point on which modern critics of Tocqueville are in more agreement than on his ignorance of the changes that took place in America and in Europe during the first half of the XIXth century in matters of industry, of the process of urbanization, and the little attention that he gave to steamboats, canals, railroads and other technical progress. The publication of his travel notes and the book of Seymour Drescher (*Tocqueville and Beaumont on Social Reform,* New York: Harper and Row, 1968) show, however, that his description of Manchester is largely devoted to the results of industrialization and that, far from being unaware of the problem, he knew about it and was preoccupied by it.

If Tocqueville evokes the problem of industrialization only rapidly, it is above all because the purpose of his work, like his anti-materialism, scarcely pushes him there. What interests him is the energy (acquiring money and the taste for material well-being) that creates industry and the effects that it produces (the new manufacturing aristocracy). According to Seymour Drescher again (*Tocqueville and England,* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964, pp. 60–61), the friendship of Senior would have had a real influence on Tocqueville's ideas about the economy. See *Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, especially pages 67–68 and 78–85.

I see nothing in the political world that should occupy the legislator more than these two new axioms of industrial science.

When an artisan devotes himself constantly and solely to the fabrication of a single object, he ends by acquitting himself of this work with a singular dexterity. But he loses, at the same time, the general ability to apply his mind to directing the work. Each day he becomes more skillful and less industrious, and you can say that in him the man becomes degraded as the worker improves.

What should you expect from a man who has used twenty years of his life making pinheads? And in his case, to what in the future can the powerful human intelligence, which has often stirred the world, be applied, if not to searching for the best way to make pinheads!

When a worker has in this way consumed a considerable portion of his existence, his thought has stopped forever near the daily object of his labor; his body has contracted certain fixed habits that he is no longer allowed to give up. In a word, he no longer belongs to himself, but to the profession that he chose. Laws and mores have in vain taken care to break down all the barriers around this man and to open for him in all directions a thousand different roads toward fortune; an industrial theory more powerful than mores and laws has bound him to an occupation and often to a place in society that he cannot leave. Amid the universal movement, it has made him immobile.

As the principle of the division of labor is more completely applied, the worker becomes weaker, more limited, and more dependent. The art makes progress, the artisan goes backward. On the other hand, as it becomes clearer that the larger the scale of manufacturing and the greater the capital, the more perfect and the less expensive the products of an industry are, very rich and very enlightened men arise to exploit industries that, until then, have been left to ignorant and poor artisans. The greatness of the necessary efforts and the immensity of the results to achieve attract them.

Thus, at the same time that industrial science constantly lowers the class of workers, it raises the class of masters.

While the worker applies his intelligence more and more to the study

of a single detail, the master casts his sight every day over a broader whole, and his mind expands in proportion as that of the worker contracts. Soon nothing will be needed by the worker except physical strength without intelligence; the master needs knowledge, and almost genius to succeed. The one more and more resembles the administrator of a vast empire, and the other a brute.

So the master and the worker are not in any way similar here, and every day they differ more. They are no longer held together except as the two end links of a long chain. Each one occupies a place made for him and does not leave it. The one is in a continual, narrow and necessary dependence on the other, and seems born to obey, as the latter to command.

What is this, if not aristocracy?[d]

As conditions become more and more equal in the body of the nation, the need for manufactured objects becomes more general and increases, and an inexpensive price that puts these objects within reach of mediocre fortunes becomes a greater element of success.

So every day more opulent and more enlightened men are found who devote their wealth and their knowledge to industry and who seek, by opening great workshops and strictly dividing labor, to satisfy the new desires that appear on all sides.

Thus, as the mass of the nation turns to democracy, the particular class that is concerned with industry becomes more aristocratic. Men show themselves more and more similar in the nation and more and more different in the particular class, and inequality increases in the small society in proportion as it decreases in the large one.

In this way, when you go back to the source, it seems that you see aristocracy come by a natural effort from the very heart of democracy.

But that aristocracy does not resemble the aristocracies that preceded it.

You will notice first that, applying only to industry and to a few of the

d. "Examine a bit practically the question of knowing how you could re-create an aristocracy of fortunes, bring together (illegible word), give privileges.

"Piece on the impossibility of a new aristocracy, 2nd vol., p. 425" (YTC, CVc, p. 55). This concerns p. 635 of the second volume.

industrial professions, it is an exception, a monstrosity, within the whole of the social state.

The small aristocratic societies formed by certain industries amid the immense democracy of our time include, like the great aristocratic societies of former times, a few very opulent men and a multitude of very miserable ones.

These poor have few means to emerge from their condition and to become rich, but the rich constantly become poor, or leave trade after having realized their profits. Thus, the elements that form the class of the poor are more or less fixed; but the elements that compose the class of the rich are not. Truly speaking, although there are rich men, the class of the rich does not exist; for these rich men have neither spirit nor aims in common, nor shared traditions or shared hopes. So there are members, but not a corps.

Not only are the rich not united solidly with each other, but you can say that there is no true bond between the poor and the rich.

They are not fixed in perpetuity next to each other; at every moment interest draws them closer and separates them. The worker depends in general on the master, but not on a particular master. These two men see each other at the factory and do not know each other elsewhere, and while they touch at one point, they remain very far apart at all others. The manufacturer asks the worker only for his work, and the worker expects from him only a salary. The one does not commit himself to protecting, nor the other to defending, and they are not linked in a permanent way, either by habit or by duty.

The aristocracy established by trade hardly ever settles amid the industrial population that it directs; its goal is not to govern the latter, but to make use of it.

An aristocracy thus constituted cannot have a great hold on those it employs; and if it manages to seize them for a moment, they soon escape. It does not know what it wants and cannot act.

The territorial aristocracy of past centuries was obligated by law, or believed itself obligated by mores, to come to the aid of those who served it and to relieve their miseries. But the manufacturing aristocracy of today, after impoverishing and brutalizing the men it uses, delivers them in times of crisis to public charity to be fed. This results naturally from what pre-

cedes. Between the worker and the master, contacts are frequent, but there is no true association.

I think that, everything considered, the manufacturing aristocracy that we see arising before our eyes is one of the harshest that has appeared on the earth; but at the same time it is one of the most limited and least dangerous.

Nonetheless, it is in this direction that the friends of democracy must with anxiety constantly turn their attention; for if permanent inequality of conditions and aristocracy ever penetrate the world again, you can predict that they will come in through this door.

THIRD PART[a]

Influence of Democracy on Mores Properly So Called

a. Action of equality on mores and reaction of mores on equality./

After doing a book that pointed out the influence exercised by equality of conditions on ideas, customs and mores, another one would have to be done that showed the influence exercised by ideas, customs and mores on equality of conditions. For these two things have a reciprocal action on each other. And to take just one example, the comparatively democratic social state of European peoples in the XVIth century allowed the doctrines of Protestantism, based in part on the theory of intellectual equality, to arise and spread; and on the other hand, you cannot deny that these doctrines, once accepted, singularly hastened the leveling of conditions. If I examined separately the first of these influences, without concerning myself with the second, it is not that I did not know and appreciate the extent and the power of the latter. But I believed that in a subject so difficult and so complicated, it was already a lot to study separately one of the parts, to put the parts separately in relief, leaving to more skillful hands the task of exposing the entire tableau to view all at once (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 48–49). Tocqueville finishes the third part of this volume at Baugy in April 1838.

See Jean-Louis Benoît, *Tocqueville moraliste* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004), pp. 309–442.

CHAPTER 1[a]

How Mores Become Milder as Conditions Become Equal

We have noticed for several centuries that conditions are becoming equal, and we have found at the same time that mores are becoming milder.[b] Are

a. 1. Equality makes mores milder in an *indirect* manner, by giving the taste for well-being, love for peace and for all the professions that need peace.

2. It makes them milder *directly.*

When men are divided into castes, they have a fraternal sentiment for the members of their caste, but they scarcely regard all the others as men. Great (illegible word) and great categories.

When all men are similar, what happens within them alerts them to what must happen in all the others, and they cannot be insensitive to any misery. They are not devoted, but they are mild.

Example of the Americans (YTC, CVf, pp. 36–37).

b. Two peoples have the same origin, they have lived for a long time under the same laws; they have kept the same language and the same habits of life, but they are not similar; what causes that?

[In the margin: At the head of civil society. Transition from political society to civil society. Influence of laws on character.

Influence of democracy in America on mores. Everything is modeled on the people. The rich man must grow up with the people, must travel with them, must take his enjoyments with them. He can scarcely protect himself from them in the refuge of the domestic hearth.

At home the rich man is under permanent suspicion. And he must in a way be poor or once have been poor to aspire to honors.]

The one is eager to change, the past displeases him, the present tires him, only the future seems to him to merit his thought. He scorns age and scoffs at experience. He makes, undoes, remakes his laws without ceasing. Everything changes and is modified by his indefatigable activity, even the earth that supports him. Superiorities of all kinds offend and wound him. He even sees the plebeian privileges of wealth only with disfavor.

these two things only contemporaneous, or does some secret link exist between them, so that the one cannot go ahead without making the other move?

Several causes can work together to make the mores of a people less harsh; but, among all these causes, the most powerful one seems to me to be equality of conditions. So in my view equality of conditions and mores becoming mild are not only contemporaneous events, but also correlative facts.[c]

[≠Equality of conditions leads men toward industrial and commercial professions, which need peace in order for men to devote themselves to those professions. Equality of conditions suggests to men the taste for material enjoyments; it distances them imperceptibly from war and violent

His vanity is constantly uneasy. He seeks praise. There is no flattery so small that he does not receive it with joy. If he fails in his efforts to obtain it, he praises himself and becomes intoxicated with the incense that his hands have prepared. The laws are democratic.

The other is prostrated before the past, he mixes everything that comes from antiquity in his idolatry and esteems things not so much because they are good, but because they are old. So he takes care to change nothing in his laws or, if the irresistible march of time forces him to deviate on certain points, there are no ingenious subtleties to which he will not resort in order to persuade himself that he has only found in the work of his fathers what was already there and only developed a thought that had formerly occurred to their minds. Do not hope to get him to acknowledge that he is an innovator; although a very strong logician otherwise, he will agree to go to the absurd rather than admit himself guilty of such a great crime. Full of veneration for superiorities of all kinds, he seems to consider birth and wealth as so many natural and imprescriptible rights [v: privileges] that call certain men to govern society [v. in the margin: wealth as a virtue and birth as an imprescriptible right]. With him, the poor man is scarcely considered as a man. Full, moreover, of an immense pride, he thinks he is sufficiently sure of his grandeur not to ask the common people to acknowledge it, and he judges himself so above praise that he does not need to give it. The laws are aristocratic.

There are men who say that this is the American spirit and I say that it is the democratic spirit. What is taken for the English spirit is the aristocratic spirit (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 14–16). The copyist, Bonnel, indicates that one part of this piece is not in Tocqueville's hand. See p. 437 of the second volume.

c. In the margin: "≠You cannot hide from the fact that the natural place of war would be there, for it is only in the absence of wars or in the manner in which it is conducted that the subject of this chapter is proved.≠"

revolutions. I have already said a portion of these things; I will show the others in the course of this work.[d]

Those are the indirect effects of equality of conditions; its direct effects are not less.≠]

When writers of fables want to interest us in the actions of the animals, they give them human ideas and passions. Poets do the same when they speak about spirits and angels.[e] No miseries are so deep, or joys so pure that they cannot capture our minds and take hold of our hearts, if we are presented to ourselves under other features.

This applies very well to the subject that occupies us presently.

When all men are arranged in an irrevocable manner, according to their profession, their property and their birth, within an aristocratic society, the members of each class, all considering themselves as children of the same family, experience for each other a continual and active sympathy[f]

d. Equality of conditions leads citizens toward industrial and commercial professions and makes them love peace, which they need in order to devote themselves to those professions. Equality of conditions thus imperceptibly little by little takes away from the citizens the love of violent emotions and suggests to them the taste for tranquil enjoyments. As conditions become equal, the imagination of men therefore turns imperceptibly away from the cruel pictures offered by war and feeds more readily on the mild images presented by well-being. Human passions are not extinguished, they change objects and become less fierce. Accustomed to the charms of a well-ordered and prosperous life, you are afraid of being saddened by making your fellows suffer and you fear the sight of the pain almost as much as the pain itself.

[In the margin: I do not believe that this piece should be introduced, however to consult./

The things it contains are true and important, but they prevent the unity of the chapter.]

This is how equality of conditions leads indirectly to the mildness of mores. The direct effects are not less.

When writers of fables . . . (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 5–6).

e. In the margin: "and Milton would never have succeeded in interesting us in the fate of [a blank (ed.)] if he had not given human feelings to the devils and to the angels."

f. *Sympathy./*

It is a democratic word. You have real sympathy only for those similar to you and your equals. The humanity that we notice today is due in part to men being closer to each other. When there were only great lords and men of the people, men were

that can never be found to the same degree among the citizens of a democracy.

But it is not the same with the different classes vis-à-vis each other.

Among an aristocratic people, each caste has its opinions, its sentiments, its rights, its mores, its separate existence. Thus, the men who compose each caste are not similar to any of the others; they do not have the same way of thinking or of feeling, and they scarcely believe that they are part of the same humanity.

So they cannot understand well what the others experience, or judge the latter by themselves.

Yet you sometimes see them lend themselves with fervor to mutual aid; but that is not contrary to what precedes.

These same aristocratic institutions, which had made beings of the same species so different, had nevertheless joined them by a very close political bond.

Although the serf was not naturally interested in the fate of the nobles, he believed himself no less obligated to devote himself to the one among the nobles who was his leader; and although the noble believed himself of another nature than the serf, he nonetheless judged that his duty and his honor forced him to defend, at the risk of his own life, those who lived on his domains.

It is clear that these mutual obligations did not arise out of natural right, but political right, and that society obtained more than humanity alone was able to do. It was not to the man that you believed yourself obliged to lend support, it was to the vassal or to the lord. Feudal institutions made very tangible the misfortunes of certain men, not the miseries of the human

strangers to each other and above all different; no one could judge by himself what others felt. So there could not be true sympathy, and mores were hard.

[In the margin: Aristocracy gives birth to great devotions and great hatreds. Democracy leads all men to a sort of tranquil benevolence./

Sympathy *less* but *general.*]

17 October 1836.

These classes were indifferent to each other's fate not because they were *enemies,* but simply because they were *different.* Sympathy from two Greek words, I believe, meaning *to feel with* (*Rubish,* 2).

species. They gave to mores generosity rather than mildness, and although they suggested great attachments, they did not give birth to true sympathies; for there are real sympathies only between similar people; and in aristocratic centuries, you see people similar to you only in the members of your caste.

When the chroniclers of the Middle Ages, who all, by their birth or their habits, belonged to the aristocracy, report the tragic end of a nobleman, there are infinite sorrows; while they recount in one breath and without batting an eye the massacre and tortures of the men of the people.

It is not that these writers felt a habitual hatred or a systematic disdain for the people. The war between the various classes of the State had not yet been declared. They obeyed an instinct rather than a passion; as they did not form a clear idea of the sufferings of the poor, they were little interested in their fate.

It was the same with the men of the people, as soon as the feudal bond was broken. These same centuries, which saw so much heroic devotion on the part of the vassals for their lords, had witnessed unheard of cruelties exercised from time to time by the lower classes against the upper classes.[g]

You must not believe that this mutual insensitivity is due only to the absence of order and enlightenment; for you again find its trace in the following centuries that, even while becoming well-ordered and enlightened, still remained aristocratic.

In the year 1675, the lower classes of Brittany were roused by a new tax. This tumultuous movement was put down with unparalleled atrocity. Here is how Madame de Sévigné, witness to these horrors, informed her daughter about them:

> Aux Rochers, 30 October 1675.
>
> My heavens, my daughter, how amusing your letter from Aix is! At least reread your letters before sending them. Allow yourself to be caught up in their charm, and with this pleasure, console yourself for the burden you have of writing so many of them. So have you kissed all of Provence? There would be no satisfaction in kissing all of Brittany, unless you loved to smell of wine. [. . . (ed.) . . .] Do you want to know the news from Rennes? [. . . (ed.) . . .] A tax of one hundred thousand *écus* was imposed,

g. In the margin, in pencil: "≠Example, Jacquerie.≠"

> and if this amount was not found within twenty-four hours, it would be doubled and would be collected by soldiers. One entire great street was chased away and banished, and the inhabitants were forbidden to come back under pain of death; so that all these miserable people, new mothers, old people, children, wandered in tears outside this city, without knowing where to go, without food or anywhere to sleep. The day before yesterday the violinist who began the dance and the theft of the stamped paper was broken on the wheel; he was quartered, and the four parts were displayed in the four corners of the city. [. . . (ed.) . . .] Sixty bourgeois were taken and tomorrow they will begin to be hanged. This province is a good example to the others, above all to respect governors and the wives of governors, and not to throw stones into their gardens.[1]
>
> Yesterday Madame de Tarente was in her woods in delightful weather. It is not a question of either staying there or eating there. She goes in by the gate and comes out the same way . . .

In another letter she adds:

> You talk to me very amusingly about our miseries; we are no longer broken on the wheel so much; one in eight days in order to uphold justice. It is true that hanging now seems refreshing to me. I have an entirely different idea of justice since being in this country. Your men condemned to the galleys seem to me to be a society of honest men who have withdrawn from the world in order to lead a pleasant life.

We would be wrong to believe that Madame de Sévigné, who wrote these lines, was an egotistical and barbarous creature; she passionately loved her children and showed herself very sensitive to the misfortunes of her friends; and we even notice, reading her, that she treated her vassals and her servants with kindness and indulgence. But Madame de Sévigné did not clearly understand what suffering was when you were not a gentleman.

Today, the harshest man, writing to the most insensitive person, would not dare to give himself to the cruel banter that I have just reproduced, and even when his particular mores would permit him to do so, the general mores of the nation would forbid him.

1. *To sense the pertinence of this final joke, you must recall that Madame de Grignan was the wife of the Governor of Provence.*

What causes that? Are we more sensitive than our fathers? I do not know; but certainly our sensibility falls on more things.

When ranks are nearly equal among a people, since all men have more or less the same way of thinking and feeling, each one of them can judge in a moment the sensations of all the others; he glances quickly at himself; that is sufficient. So there is no misery that he cannot easily imagine and whose extent is not revealed to him by a secret instinct. Whether it concerns strangers or enemies, imagination immediately puts him in their place. It mingles something personal in his pity, and makes him suffer as the body of his fellow man is torn apart.

In democratic centuries, men rarely sacrifice themselves for each other; but they show a general compassion for all the members of the human species. You do not see them inflict useless evils, and when, without hurting themselves very much, they can relieve the sufferings of others, they take pleasure in doing so; they are not disinterested, but they are mild.

Although the Americans have so to speak reduced egoism to a social and political theory, they have shown themselves no less very open to pity.

There is no country in which criminal justice is administered more benignly than in the United States. While the English seem to want to preserve carefully in their penal legislation the bloody traces of the Middle Ages, the Americans have almost made the death penalty disappear from their legal order.

North America is, I think, the only country on earth where, for the last fifty years, the life of not a single citizen has been taken for political crimes.

What finally proves that this singular mildness of the Americans comes principally from their social state, is the manner in which they treat their slaves.

Perhaps, everything considered, there is no European colony in the New World in which the physical condition of the Blacks is less harsh than in the United States. But slaves there still experience dreadful miseries and are constantly exposed to very cruel punishments.

It is easy to discover that the fate of these unfortunates inspires little pity

in their masters, and that they see in slavery not only a fact from which they profit, but also an evil that scarcely touches them. Thus, the same man who is full of humanity for his fellows when the latter are at the same time his equals, becomes insensitive to their sufferings from the moment when equality ceases. So his mildness must be attributed to this equality still more than to civilization and enlightenment.

What I have just said about individuals applies to a certain degree to peoples.

When each nation has its separate opinions, beliefs, laws and customs, it considers itself as forming by itself the whole of humanity, and feels touched only by its own sufferings. If war comes to break out between two peoples so inclined, it cannot fail to be conducted with barbarism.

At the time of their greatest enlightenment, the Romans cut the throats of enemy generals, after dragging them in triumph behind a chariot, and delivered prisoners to the beasts for the amusement of the people. Cicero, who raises such loud cries at the idea of a citizen crucified, finds nothing to say about these atrocious abuses of victory. It is clear that in his eyes a foreigner is not of the same human species as a Roman.[h]

On the contrary, as peoples become more similar to each other, they show themselves reciprocally more compassionate toward their misfortunes, and the law of nations becomes milder.

h. Something analogous is seen from one people to another. When peoples are very different from each other, separated by opinions, beliefs, opposite customs, they seem as well to be outside of the same humanity. Moreover, aristocratic sentiments also become established between them. They believe themselves not only different but also superior to each other. That would lead naturally to a law of nations horrible in times of war.

Romans. Jugurtha.

Now wars between peoples are like civil wars in antiquity (*Rubish,* 2).

CHAPTER 2[a]

How Democracy Makes the Habitual Relations of the Americans Simpler and Easier[b]

Democracy does not bind men closely together, but it makes their habitual relationships easier.

Two Englishmen meet by chance at the far ends of the earth; they are surrounded by strangers whose language and mores they hardly know.

[<I think that they are going to run eagerly toward each other. What more is needed to draw men closer in a far-away land than a native land in common?>]

The two men at first consider each other very curiously and with a sort

a. In aristocracies based solely on birth, since no one is able to climb or descend, the relationships between men are infrequent, but not constrained.

In aristocracies based principally on money such as the English, aristocratic pride remains, but since the limits of the aristocracy have become doubtful, each man fears that his familiarity will be abused. You avoid contact with someone unknown or you remain icy before him.

When there are no more privileges of birth or privileges of money as in America, men readily mingle and greet each other familiarly (YTC, CVf, p. 37).

b. INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY ON AMERICAN SOCIABILITY./

Chapter following those on egoism. Sociability, which is sacrifice in small things, with hope to find it in turn, is very easily understood on the part of beings independent of each other, but equally weak individually, and is not at all contrary to the egoism that I portrayed above./

Good qualities of the Americans. Sociability, lack of susceptibility. See Beaumont, C.N.6 (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON SOCIABILITY, *Rubish,* 2). The reference to Beaumont also appears in YTC, CVa, p. 30.

of secret uneasiness; then they turn away from each other, or, if they greet each other, they take care to speak only with a restrained and distracted air, and to say things of little importance.[c]

No enmity exists between them, however; they have never seen each other, and reciprocally regard each other as very respectable. So why do they take such care to avoid each other?

We must go back to England in order to understand.

When birth alone, independent of wealth, classifies men, each man knows precisely the place he occupies on the social ladder; he does not try to climb, and is not afraid of descending. In a society organized in this way, men of different castes communicate little with each other; but when chance puts them in contact, they readily become engrossed, without hope or fear of intermingling. Their relationships are not based on equality; but they are not constrained.

When aristocracy of money follows aristocracy of birth, it is no longer the same.

The privileges of a few are still very great, but the possibility of acquiring them is open to all; from that it follows that those who possess them are constantly preoccupied by the fear of losing them or of seeing them shared; and those who do not yet have them want at any cost to possess them, or, if they cannot succeed in that, to appear to possess them, which is not impossible. As the social value of men is no longer fixed by blood in a clear and permanent manner and varies infinitely depending on wealth, ranks always exist, but you no longer see clearly and at first glance those who occupy those ranks.

A hidden war is immediately established among all the citizens; some try hard, by a thousand artifices, to join in reality or in appearance those who are above them; others fight constantly to repulse these men usurping their rights, or rather the same man does both things, and, while he is trying to get into the upper sphere, he struggles without respite against the effort that comes from below.

c. In the margin: "<All of this a bit affected, I think, in imitation of La Bruyère. Read it without warning in order to see the effect.>"

Such is the state of England today, and I think that what precedes must be principally attributed to this state.

Since aristocratic pride is still very great among the English, and since the boundaries of aristocracy have become doubtful, each man fears at every moment that his familiarity will be abused. Not able to judge at first glance what the social situation is of those you meet, you prudently avoid entering into contact with them. You are afraid of forming despite yourself a badly matched friendship by rendering small services; you fear good offices, and you elude the indiscreet recognition of someone unknown as carefully as his hatred.

There are many men who explain, by purely physical causes, this singular unsociability and this reserved and taciturn temperament of the English.[d] I am willing to agree that blood in fact has some role; but I believe that the social state has a much greater one. The example of the Americans proves it.

In America, where privileges of birth have never existed, and where wealth gives no particular right to the one who possesses it, people who do not know each other readily get together in the same places, and find neither advantage nor danger in freely sharing their thoughts. If they meet by chance, they neither seek each other out nor avoid each other; so their encounter is natural, straightforward and open; you see that they neither hope nor fear hardly anything from each other, and that they try no harder to

d. Today the influence exercised by race on the conduct of men is spoken about constantly. The philosophers and men of politics of ancient times have .-.-.-.- race *explains* everything in a word. It seems to me that I easily find why we resort so to this argument that our predecessors did not use.

It is incontestable that the race that men belong to exercises some power over their actions, and on the other hand, it is absolutely impossible to specify what the strength and the duration of this power is; so that you can at will infinitely constrict its action or expand it to everything depending on the needs of the discourse; precious advantages in a time when you expect to reason at little cost, just as you want to grow rich without difficulty.

[In the margin: Some men believe that this reserve of the English comes from the blood. The example of the Americans proves the opposite.]

After a digression for which the reader will, I hope, pardon an author who rarely makes them, I return to my subject (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON SOCIABILITY, *Rubish,* 2). The manuscript says: "Race in fact has some role, but I believe . . ."

show than to hide the place they occupy. If their countenance is often cold and serious, it is never either haughty or stiff, and when they do not speak to each other, it is because they are not in the mood to speak, and not that they believe that they have a reason to remain silent.

In a foreign country, two Americans are immediately friends, by the very fact that they are Americans. There is no prejudice that drives them apart, and the native land in common brings them together. For two Englishmen the same blood is not enough; the same rank must draw them together.

The Americans notice as well as we this unsociable temperament of the English with each other, and they are no less astonished by it than we ourselves are. But the Americans are attached to England by origin, religion, language, and in part mores; they differ from England only by social state. So it is permissible to say that the reserve of the English derives from the constitution of the country much more than from the constitution of the citizens [<the reserve of the English is not English, but aristocratic>].[*] e

[*]. Form that I believe I have already used; be careful.

e. Relationships of men with each other. Lofty and reserved manners./
Baden, this 14 August 1836./

To put with the good effects of a democratic social state./ One of the characteristic and most known traits of the English is the care with which they try to isolate themselves from each other and the perpetual fear that clearly preoccupies them of protecting themselves from contact with men who may occupy a position inferior to the one that they occupy themselves. In a foreign country above all this is carried to an extreme of which we have no idea.

This fault is infinitely less noticeable in countries in which *an aristocracy of birth* dominates and in those in which *there is no aristocracy at all.*

In the first, since ranks are never doubtful and since privileges are linked to an inalienable and uncontestable advantage, *that of blood,* each man remains in his place and no one fears meeting an intruder who wants to put himself in your place, or descending without noticing to the lower rank of someone unknown by keeping company with him.

In the second, since birth or wealth give only slight advantages and do not put the one who possesses them at a very separate or very desirable rank, connection with an inferior is not feared.

While in an aristocracy constituted on money, like that of England, privileges are very great and the conditions for enjoying them are always doubtful; from that comes this continual terror of doing something that may make you fall in rank.

This fault of the English is due so clearly to institutions and not to *blood* that it shocks the Americans even more than us. Cooper in his journey to Switzerland returns constantly to this *unsociability* of the English, and although he pretends to scorn it, he speaks about it too often not to show how much it offends him.

Nothing is more opposed to continual, free, kindly relationships among men than the frame of mind that I have just talked about (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON SOCIABILITY, *Rubish,* 2). Tocqueville is referring to *Excursions in Switzerland* by James Fenimore Cooper, published in 1836 in Paris by A.W. Calignani and Co., and by Baudry (see, for example, p. 71 and p. 143 of these editions).

CHAPTER 3[a]

Why the Americans Have So Little Susceptibility in Their Country and Show Such Susceptibility in Ours[b]

The Americans have a vindictive temperament like all solemn and serious-minded peoples. They almost never forget an insult; but it is not easy to insult them, and their resentment is as slow to flare up as to go out.

In aristocratic societies, where a small number of individuals directs everything, the external relationships of men with each other are subject to more or less fixed conventions. Each man then believes that he knows, in a precise way, by what sign it is suitable to show his respect or to indicate his goodwill, and etiquette is a science of which everyone is presumed to be aware.

These customs of the first class then serve as a model for all the other classes, and in addition each one of the latter makes a separate code, to

a. When men of diverse education and fortune meet in the same places, the laws of good manners are no longer fixed; you observe those laws badly vis-à-vis other men and you are not hurt when they are not observed in your regard. That is above all true of free democratic societies in which men, busy together with great affairs, easily forget the outward aspect of actions in order to consider only the actions themselves.

That explains the tolerance and simplicity of the Americans toward each other.

But why are these same Americans intolerant and self-conscious in Europe? Because the remnants of rules and fragments of etiquette remain among us. The Americans, not knowing how to find their bearings in a society so different from theirs, are constantly at a loss, touchy, proud (YTC, CVf, p. 38).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript: "Read this chapter to several people and study whether it has the effect of being *mannered* and *affected*."

which all its members are bound to conform [and finally there is a certain particular ceremonial that is used only between men of different classes].

The rules of good manners thus form a complicated set of laws, which is difficult to master completely, yet from which you are not allowed to deviate without risk; so that each day men constantly are involuntarily exposed to giving or receiving cruel wounds.

But, as ranks fade, as men diverse in their education and birth mix and mingle in the same places, it is almost impossible to agree on the rules of good manners. Since the laws are uncertain, to disobey them is not a crime even in the eyes of those who know them; so you are attached to the substance of actions rather than to the form, and you are at the very same time less courteous and less quarrelsome.

There is a host of small considerations that an American does not care about; he judges that he is not owed them or he supposes that you are unaware that he is owed them. So he does not notice that he is slighted, or he pardons the slight; his manners become less courteous, and his mores simpler and more manly.

This reciprocal indulgence shown by the Americans and this manly confidence that they display result also from a more general and more profound cause.

I already pointed it out in the preceding chapter.

In the United States, ranks differ only very little in civil society and do not differ at all in the political world; so an American does not believe himself bound to give particular considerations to any of his fellows, nor does he think about requiring them for himself. As he does not see that his interest is ardently to seek out the company of some of his fellow citizens, he imagines with difficulty that someone is rejecting his; not despising anyone because of condition, he does not imagine that anyone despises him because of the same reason, and until he has clearly noticed the insult, he does not believe that someone wants to offend him.

The social state [v: equality] naturally disposes the Americans not to become easily offended in small things. And, on the other hand, the democratic liberty that they enjoy finally makes this indulgence pass into the national mores.

Political institutions in the United States constantly put citizens of all

classes in contact and force them to follow great enterprises together. Men thus occupied hardly have the time to think about the details of etiquette, and moreover they have too much interest in living together harmoniously to stop over those details. So they become easily accustomed to considering, in the men they meet, sentiments and ideas rather than manners, and they do not allow themselves to be excited over trifles.

I noticed many times that, in the United States, it is not an easy thing to make a man understand that his presence is bothersome. To reach that point, indirect paths are not always sufficient.

I contradict an American at every point, in order to make him sense that his speeches fatigue me; and at every instant I see him make new efforts to persuade me; I keep a stubborn silence, and he imagines that I am reflecting profoundly on the truths that he is presenting; and when finally I suddenly escape from his pursuit, he assumes that a pressing matter calls me elsewhere. This man will not comprehend that he exasperates me unless I tell him so, and I will be able to save myself from him only by becoming his mortal enemy.

What is surprising at first is that this same man transported to Europe suddenly becomes punctilious and difficult to deal with [<he attaches himself stubbornly to the slightest details of etiquette and often he even creates imaginary ones that apply only to him>], to the point that often I have as much difficulty in not offending him as I found in displeasing him. These two so different effects are produced by the same cause.

Democratic institutions in general give men a vast idea of their country and of themselves.

The American leaves his country with his heart puffed up with pride. He arrives in Europe and notices first that we are not as preoccupied as he imagined with the United States and with the great people that inhabits them. This begins to upset him.[c]

He has heard it said that conditions are not equal in our hemisphere. He notices, in fact, that among the nations of Europe, the trace of ranks

c. "Because with a great deal of national pride, they are still not sure about the rank that they hold among nations, and because claiming the first rank, they *are not* sure that it is granted to them" (*Rubish,* 2).

is not entirely erased; that wealth and birth retain uncertain privileges that are as difficult for him to ignore as to define. This spectacle surprises him and makes him uneasy, because it is entirely new to him; nothing that he has seen in his country helps him to understand it. So he is deeply unaware of what place it is suitable to occupy in this half-destroyed hierarchy, among those classes that are distinct enough to hate and despise each other, and close enough for him to be always ready to confuse them. He is afraid of putting himself too high, and above all of being ranked too low; this double danger constantly troubles his mind and continually hinders his actions, like his conversation.

Tradition taught him that in Europe things ceremonial varied infinitely depending on conditions; this memory of another time really disturbs him, and he fears all the more not gaining the considerations that are due to him since he does not know precisely what they consist of. So he is always walking like a man surrounded by traps; society for him is not a relaxation, but a serious work. He weighs your slightest moves, questions your looks and carefully analyzes all your words, for fear that they contain some hidden allusions that injure him. I do not know if there has ever been a country gentleman more punctilious than he in the matter of good manners; he works hard to obey the least laws of etiquette himself, and he does not put up with anyone neglecting any of those laws in his regard; he is at the very same time full of scruples and demands; he would like to do enough, but is afraid of doing too much, and as he does not know very well the limits of either, he holds himself in an uneasy and haughty reserve.

This is still not all, and here is another twist of the human heart.

An American speaks every day about the admirable equality that reigns in the United States; he boasts out loud about it concerning his country; but he is secretly distressed about it concerning himself, and he aspires to show that, as for him, he is an exception to the general order that he advocates.

You hardly meet an American[d] who does not want to be connected a bit

d. You find, with the manuscript of the chapter, a jacket on which you read: "RUBISH THAT I LEAVE WITH THE CHAPTER IN ORDER TO EXAMINE IT ONE LAST TIME." Inside Tocqueville specifies: ". . . an American {of New England} who . . ."

by his birth to the first settlers of the colonies, and, as for branches of the great families of England, America seemed to me totally covered by them.

When an opulent American comes to Europe, his first concern is to surround himself with all the riches of luxury; and he is so afraid that someone will take him for a simple citizen of a democracy that he twists and turns in a hundred ways in order to present before you every day a new image of his wealth. He usually finds lodging in the most conspicuous area of the city; he has numerous servants who surround him constantly. [Still he will notice that he is badly served and frequently gets worked up against these people who become familiar with their masters.]

I heard an American complain that, in the principal *salons* of Paris, you met only mixed society. The taste reigning there did not seem pure enough to him, and he adroitly let it be understood that in his opinion, manners there lacked distinction. He was not used to seeing wit hide in this way under common forms.

Such contrasts should not be surprising. [The same cause gives birth to them.]

If the trace of old aristocratic distinctions were not so completely erased in the United States, the Americans would appear less simple and less tolerant in their country, less demanding and less ill-at-ease in ours.

CHAPTER 4[a]

Consequences of the Three Preceding Chapters

When men feel a natural pity for each other's misfortunes, when easy and frequent relationships draw them closer each day without any susceptibility dividing them, it is easy to understand that they will, as needed, mutually lend each other their aid. When an American asks for the help of his fellows, it is very rare for the latter to refuse it to him, and I have often observed that they grant it to him spontaneously with great zeal.

If some unforeseen accident takes place on the public road, people rush from all directions to the one who is the victim; if some great unexpected misfortune strikes a family, the purses of a thousand strangers open without difficulty; modest, but very numerous gifts come to the aid of the family's misery.

It frequently happens, among the most civilized nations of the globe, that someone unfortunate finds himself as isolated in the middle of the crowd as the savage in the woods; that is hardly ever seen in the United States. The Americans, who are always cold in their manners and often crude, hardly ever appear insensitive, and, if they do not hasten to offer their services, they do not refuse to render them.

All of this is not contrary to what I said before regarding individualism. I even see that these things, far from being in conflict, are in agreement.

a. Men of democracies naturally show pity for each other; having frequent and easy relationships together, not easily becoming irritated with each other, it is natural that they like to help each other in their needs. This is what happens in the United States. In democracies great services are rarely accorded, but good offices are rendered constantly. It is rare that a man appears devoted to service, but all are willing to help (YTC, CVf, pp. 38–39). There is no *rubish* for this chapter.

Equality of conditions, at the same time that it makes men feel their independence, shows them their weakness; they are free, but exposed to a thousand accidents, and experience does not take long to teach them that, although they do not habitually need the help of others, some moment almost always occurs when they cannot do without that help.

We see every day in Europe that men of the same profession readily help each other; they are all exposed to the same evils; that is enough for them to try mutually to protect themselves from those evils, however hard or egotistical they are elsewhere. So whenever one of them is in danger, and when, by a small temporary sacrifice or a sudden impulse, the others can shield him, they do not fail to attempt it. It is not that they are profoundly interested in his fate; for if, by chance, the efforts that they make to help him are useless, they immediately forget him and return to themselves; but a sort of tacit and almost involuntary agreement has been made between them, according to which each one owes to the others a momentary support that, in his turn, he will be able to ask for himself.

Extend to a people what I say about only a class, and you will understand my thought.

There exists, in fact, among all the citizens of a democracy, a convention analogous to the one that I am talking about; everyone feels subject to the same weakness and to the same dangers, and their interest, as well as their sympathy, makes it a law for them to lend each other mutual assistance as needed.

The more similar conditions become, the more men exhibit this reciprocal disposition for mutual obligation.

In democracies, where great services are scarcely accorded, good offices are rendered constantly. It is rare that a man appears devoted to service, but all are willing to help.

CHAPTER 5[a]

How Democracy Modifies the Relationships of Servant and Master

An American,[b] who had traveled for a long time in Europe, said to me one day:

a. 1. Character of domestic service in aristocratic centuries.

1. Servants form a separate class that has its gradations, its prejudices, its public opinion.

2. The perpetuity and immobility of classes make it that there are families of servants who remain for centuries next to families of masters. From that arises a confusion of sentiments, opinions, and interests between them.

3. In that time it is easy to obtain a respectful, prompt and easy obedience, because each master presses on the will of his servants with all the weight of the aristocracy.

2. Character of democratic domestic service. No devoted loyalty, but an exact obedience arising not from a general superiority of the master over the servant, but from a contract freely accepted.

3. Transitional domestic service, where everything is confused. The master wants to find in his servants the devoted loyalty that arose from the aristocratic social state, and the servants do not even want to grant the obedience that they promised (YTC, CVf, pp. 39–40). In the *rubish* you find traces of a first chapter bearing the title: THE MASTER AND THE TENANT FARMER IN DEMOCRACIES.

b. Conversation with Mr. Robinson, an American engineer of great talents. 22 March 1837./

[In the margin: Perhaps introduce this conversation in the text.]

Mr. Robinson told me that the English treated their servants with a contempt, a haughtiness and with absolute manners that singularly surprised an American.

On the other hand, he remarked that the French often used with their domestics a familiarity and a courtesy that did not seem less extraordinary to him. He had heard a lady say to a domestic who informed her about the execution of an order: I am very much obliged, so and so. This form seems strange to him. I see some French, he added, call a porter, Monsieur. It is something I could never do.

> The English treat their servants with a haughtiness and with absolute manners that surprise us; but, on the other hand, the French sometimes use a familiarity with theirs, or reveal in their regard a courtesy that we cannot imagine. You would say that they are afraid of giving orders. The position of superior and inferior is badly kept.

This remark is correct, and I have made it myself many times.[c]

I have always considered England as the country in the world where, today, the bond of domestic service is the tightest and France the country on earth where it is most loose. Nowhere has the master appeared to me higher or lower than in these two countries.

The Americans are placed between these extremes.

That is the superficial and apparent fact. We must go much further in order to discover its causes.

We have not yet seen societies in which conditions were so equal that neither rich nor poor were found, and consequently, neither masters nor servants.

Democracy does not prevent these two classes of men from existing; but it changes their spirit and modifies their relationships.

[It is easy to see that all classes that compose a society are so naturally bound together that all must move at the same time or remain immobile. It is enough to hold one of them in place for all the others to stop by themselves.

So from the moment when I find a caste of perpetual masters composed of the same families, I understand without difficulty that there exists a caste

This same Mr. Robinson, said finally: in the United States domestic servants believe themselves obliged to do only what is in the contract. They are very independent and little .-.-.-.-.- relationships with the master, the position of superior and inferior is always kept.

This conversation gets very much, it seems to me, into the meaning of my chapter (*Rubish,* 2). The person speaking to Tocqueville is unidentified.

c. In the margin: "<If this remark is correct, the American of the preceding chapter was therefore not wrong. Clearly to delete either this or the sentence from the other chapter. That jumps out.>"

of servants formed in the same way, and I foresee that this perpetuity is going to produce similar effects from both sides.][d]

Among aristocratic peoples, servants form a particular class that does not vary any more than that of the masters. A fixed order does not take long to arise; in the first as in the second, you soon see a hierarchy, numerous classifications, marked ranks, and the generations follow each other without the positions changing. Servants and masters are two societies superimposed on each other, always distinct, but governed by analogous principles.[e]

This aristocratic constitution influences the ideas and mores of the servants scarcely less than those of the masters, and although the effects may be different, it is easy to recognize the same cause.

Both form small nations amid the large one; and in the end, in their midst, certain permanent notions about right and wrong are born. The different actions of human life are seen in a particular light that does not change. In the society of servants as in that of the masters, men exercise a great influence on each other. They acknowledge fixed rules, and lacking a law, they encounter a public opinion that directs them; well-regulated habits and an order reign there.

These men, whose destiny is to obey, undoubtedly do not understand glory, virtue, integrity, honor, in the same way as the masters. But they have developed a glory, virtues, and an integrity of servants, and they imagine, if I can express myself in this way, a sort of servants' honor.[1]

Because a class is low, you must not believe that all those who are part

d. In the margin: "<Good sentence, but to delete. This piece must be pruned rather than added to.>"

e. "In a society all classes go together. They all move at the same time or all remain immobile. When a single class becomes immobile all the others stop by themselves.

I stop the wheel of a clock and everything stops" (*Rubish,* 2).

1. *If you come to examine closely and in detail the principal opinions that direct these men, the analogy appears still more striking, and you are astonished to find among them, as well as among the most haughty members of a feudal hierarchy, pride of birth, respect for one's ancestors and descendents, scorn for the inferior, fear of contact, taste for etiquette, for the traditions of antiquity.*

of it have a base heart. That would be a great error. However inferior the class may be, the man who is first in it and who has no idea of leaving that class, finds himself in an aristocratic position that suggests to him elevated sentiments, a noble pride and a respect for himself, which makes him fit for great virtues and uncommon actions.

Among aristocratic peoples, it was not rare to find, in the service of the great, noble and vigorous souls who bore servitude without feeling it, and who submitted to the will of their master without fearing his anger.

But it was hardly ever like this in the lower ranks of the domestic class. [<The first were placed higher in the scale of beings than the modern servant, the second fell below.>] You conceive that the one who holds the lowest place of a hierarchy of valets is very low.

The French had created a word expressly for this lowest of the servants of the aristocracy. They called him a lackey.

[<≠The lackey was this man abandoned by fate who was born, lived, died in a hereditary shame, despised and laughed at by all.≠>]

The word lackey served as an extreme word, when any other was missing, to represent human baseness; under the old monarchy, when you wanted at some moment to portray a vile and degraded being, you said of him that he had the *soul of a lackey.* That alone sufficed. The meaning was complete and understood.[f]

Permanent inequality of conditions not only gives servants certain particular virtues and certain particular vices; it also places them in a particular position vis-à-vis the masters.

Among aristocratic peoples, the poor man is trained, from birth, with the idea of being commanded. In whatever direction he turns his eyes, he immediately sees the image of hierarchy and the sight of obedience.

[If this man, prepared in this way, consecrates himself to the service of one of his fellows, he will not fail to bring to this particular state the general

f. In the margin: "≠When Mirabeau, this democrat still so full of the striking vices and virtues of the aristocracy, wanted to portray in his energetic style a cowardly and nasty being [interrupted text (ed.)].≠"

notions that the view of society suggests to him. <≠The image of the large society will be reproduced in the small one.≠>][g]

So in countries where permanent inequality of conditions reigns, the master easily obtains from his servants a prompt, complete, respectful and easy obedience, because the latter revere in him, not only the master, but the class of masters. He presses on their will with all the weight of the aristocracy.

He commands their actions; to a certain degree he even directs their thoughts. The master, in aristocracies, often exercises, even without his knowing it, a prodigious sway over the opinions, habits, and mores of those who obey him; and his influence extends very much further than even his authority.[h]

In aristocratic societies,[j] not only are there hereditary families of valets, as well as hereditary families of masters; but also the same families of valets remain, over several generations, at the side of the same families of masters (they are like parallel lines that never meet or separate); this prodigiously modifies the mutual relationships of these two orders of persons.

Thus, although, under aristocracy, the master and the servant have between them no mutual resemblance; although fortune, education, opinions, rights place them, on the contrary, at an immense distance on the scale of beings, time nevertheless ends up binding them together. A long community of memories ties them together, and, however different they may be, they assimilate; while, in democracies, where they are naturally almost the same, they always remain strangers to each other. [A few slight differences in conditions separate men, great permanent differences bind them together.]

So among aristocratic peoples, the master comes to envisage his servants

g. In the margin: "<*Perhaps delete this.*>"

h. Variant: "<Not only does he direct them without difficulty in everything that relates to him, but his influence extends to the entire ensemble of their actions. His example or his lessons naturally lead their minds toward certain beliefs and open their hearts, as he pleases, to certain tastes. He modifies in a thousand ways their ideas and their mores, and even when he ceases to be their master, he remains in a way their tutor.>"

j. The manuscript says: "In aristocratic centuries . . ."

like an inferior and secondary part of himself, and he often interests himself in their fate, by a final effort of egoism.

On their side, the servants are not far from considering themselves from the same point of view, and they sometimes identify with the person of the master, so that they finally become an accessory, in their own eyes, as in his.

In aristocracies, the servant occupies a subordinate position that he cannot leave; near him is found another man, who holds a superior rank that he cannot lose. On the one hand, obscurity, poverty, obedience forever; on the other, glory, wealth, command forever. These conditions are always different and always close, and the bond that unites them is as durable as are the conditions.

In this extreme, the servant ends by becoming disinterested in himself; he turns away from himself; he deserts himself in a way, or rather he transfers himself entirely to his master; there he creates an imaginary personality. He cloaks himself with satisfaction with the riches of those who command him; he takes pride in their glory, raises himself with their nobility, and feeds constantly on a borrowed grandeur, on which he sometimes puts more value than those who possess it fully and truly.

There is something at once touching and ridiculous in such a strange confusion of two existences.

These passions of masters carried into the souls of valets take the natural dimensions of the place that they occupy; they shrink and become lower. What was pride with the first becomes childish vanity and miserable pretension with the others. The servants of a great nobleman usually show themselves very particular about what is owed to him, and they are more attached to his least privileges than he is.

You still sometimes meet among us one of those old servants of the aristocracy; he outlives his race and will soon disappear with it.[k]

k. In the margin: "≠Caleb.≠"

In the *rubish:* "Caleb. The portrait of this man could only be drawn in an aristocratic country and can only be understood in a country that was so. The Americans will never know what Caleb means" (*Rubish,* 2).

In the United States I saw no one who resembled him. Not only do the Americans not know this man, but you have great difficulty making them understand that he exists. They find it hardly less difficult to conceive it than we ourselves have to imagine what a slave was among the Romans, or a serf in the Middle Ages. All of these men are in fact, although to different degrees, the products of the same cause. Together they withdraw far from our sight and flee daily into the obscurity of the past with the social state that gave them birth.

Equality of conditions makes new beings of the servant and of the master, and establishes new relationships between them.

When conditions are nearly equal, men constantly change place; there is still a class of valets and a class of masters; but it is not always the same individuals, or above all the same families that compose it; and there is not more permanence in command than in obedience.

Servants, not forming a separate people, do not have customs, prejudices or mores that are their own; you do not notice among them a certain turn of spirit or a particular way of feeling; they know neither the vices nor the virtues of a condition, but they share the enlightenment, ideas, sentiments, virtues and vices of their contemporaries; and they are decent or knavish just as the masters are.

Conditions are no less equal among the servants than among the masters.

As you do not find marked ranks or permanent hierarchy in the class of servants, you must not expect to find the baseness and the grandeur that are displayed in the aristocracies of valets as well as in all the others.

I never saw in the United States anything that could have reminded me of the idea of the elite servant, an idea of which we in Europe have kept

In another place: "I have sometimes met Caleb amid the ruins of our aristocratic society" (*Rubish,* 2). This concerns Balderstone Caleb, the faithful and devoted servant of the landowner of Ravenswood in *The Bride of Lammermoor* of Walter Scott.

When he reread this chapter in September 1839, Tocqueville found it too theoretical. He asked Ampère to provide him with some examples, something the latter seems not to have done (*Correspondance avec Ampère, OC,* XI, pp. 129–31).

the memory; but neither did I find in the United States the idea of the lackey. The trace of the one as well as the other is lost there.

In democracies, servants are not only equal among themselves; you can say that they are, in a way, equal to their masters.

This needs to be explained in order to make it well understood.

At every instant, the servant can become the master and aspires to become so; the servant is not therefore a man different from his master.

So why does the first have the right to command and what forces the second to obey? The temporary and free agreement of their two wills. They are not naturally inferior to each other; they become so temporarily only as a result of the contract. Within the limits of this contract, one is the servant and the other the master; outside, they are two citizens, two men.

What I beg the reader to understand well is that this is not only the notion that the servants themselves form of their state. The masters consider domestic service in the same light, and the precise limits of command and obedience are as well fixed in the mind of the one as in that of the other.[m]

m. In the drafts you find several pages on the relations of master and servant. They are contained in a jacket with the title: CHAPTER 4, SOME IDEAS RELATIVE TO THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED ON THE MORES OF THE AMERICANS BY THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL METHOD (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 29).

On one of these pages in this jacket you can read:

> [In the margin: It is clear that this entire piece beginning here and ending at the bottom of sheet 5 can only with difficulty be included in the consequences of just the philosophical method of the Americans. To reexamine./
>
> This fits into another order of ideas. To equality of conditions itself which makes the servant higher and the master lower than in Europe, and not to the philosophical consequences that result from this equality. To put in the place where I will see general causes.
>
> To keep but to transfer I think to another place this entire piece up to *in aristocratic countries* . . .]
>
> If, after examining the relationships of the son with the father, I consider those of the servant with the master, I no longer discover any analogy between the Americans and the English.
>
> England is assuredly the country in the world where the two men are placed the farthest from each other, and America the place on earth where they are the closest and yet the most independent of each other.

When most citizens have for a long time attained a more or less similar condition, and when equality is an old and accepted fact, public understanding, never influenced by the exceptions, assigns in a general way to the value of man certain limits above or below which it is difficult for any man to remain for long.

In vain do wealth and poverty, command and obedience put accidentally great distances between two men; public opinion, which is founded on the usual order of things, brings them closer to the common level and creates between them a sort of imaginary equality, despite the real inequality of their conditions.

This omnipotent opinion ends up penetrating the souls even of those whose interest could fortify them against it; it modifies their judgment at the same time that it subjugates their will.

At the bottom of their souls, the master and the servant no longer see a profound dissimilarity between them, and they neither hope nor fear ever to find one. So they are without disdain and without anger, and they find themselves neither humble nor proud when they look at each other.

The master judges that the contract is the only source of his power, and the servant finds in it the only cause of his obedience. They do not argue with each other over the reciprocal position that they occupy; instead each one easily sees his own position and sticks to it. [You do not see arising between these two men ardent or deep affections, but as they have <constantly a limited need for each other, they look upon each other with a sort of tranquil benevolence.>]

In our [{democratic}] armies, the soldier is more or less taken from the same classes as the officers and can reach the same posts; outside of military ranks, the soldier considers himself as perfectly equal to his leaders, and he is in fact; but when in military service, he has no difficulty obeying, and

That is due to several causes that I want to seek although interest in my subject does not absolutely oblige me to do so.

When among a people you find a very small number of great fortunes, a small number of destitute situations, and a multitude of comfortable fortunes, the result would seem to have to be that the rich feel stronger there and the poor weaker than anywhere else, but it is not so. When most citizens have attained . . . (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 30–31). See note a of p. 696.

his obedience, although voluntary and well-defined, is no less prompt, clear and easy.

This gives an idea of what happens in democratic societies between the servant and the master.

It would be insane to believe that there could ever arise between these two men any of those ardent and deep affections that are sometimes lit within aristocratic domestic service, or that striking examples of devotion should be seen to appear.

In aristocracies, the servant and the master see each other only from time to time, and they often speak only by intermediary. But they usually depend closely on one another.

Among democratic peoples, the servant and the master are very close; their bodies are constantly in contact, their souls do not mingle; they have shared occupations, they almost never have shared interests.

Among these peoples, the servant always considers himself as a passer-by in the house of his masters. He has not known their ancestors and will not see their descendants; he has nothing lasting to expect from them. Why would he confuse his existence with theirs, and from where would this singular self-abandonment come? The reciprocal position has changed; the relationship must do so.

I would like to be able to support all that precedes with the example of the Americans; but I cannot do so without carefully distinguishing peoples and places.

In the south of the Union, slavery exists. So all that I have just said cannot apply.

In the North, most servants are emancipated slaves or the sons of those emancipated. These men occupy a disputed position in public esteem; the law brings them closer to the level of their master, mores stubbornly push them away. They themselves do not clearly discern their place, and they appear almost always insolent or cringing.

But, in these same provinces of the North, particularly in New England, you find a fairly large number of whites who consent, in return for a salary, to subject themselves temporarily to the will of their fellows. I have heard it said that the servants usually fulfill the duties of their condition with exactitude and intelligence, and that, without believing themselves natu-

rally inferior to the one who is giving them orders, they easily submit to obeying him.

It seemed to me that those servants brought to their service some of the manly habits given birth by independence and equality. Once having chosen a hard condition, they did not look for indirect ways to escape from it, and they respect themselves enough not to refuse to their masters an obedience that they have freely promised.

On their side, the masters demand of their servants only faithful and strict execution of the contract; they do not ask them for respect; they do not claim their love or their devotion; it is enough to find them punctual and honest.

So it would not be true to say that, under democracy, the relationships of servant and master are disorderly; they are organized in another manner; the rule is different, but there is a rule.

I do not have to search here if this new state that I have just described is inferior to that which preceded, or if it is only different. It is enough for me that it is well-ordered and fixed; for what is most important to find among men is not a certain order, but order.

But what will I say about those sad and turbulent periods during which equality is being founded amid the tumult of a revolution, while democracy, after being established in the social state, is still struggling with difficulty against prejudices and mores?

The law and, in part, opinion already proclaim that no natural and permanent inferiority exists between servant and master. But this new faith has not yet deeply penetrated the mind of the latter, or rather his heart rejects it. In the secrecy of his soul, the master still considers that he is a particular and superior species; but he does not dare to say so, and he allows himself to be drawn trembling toward the standard level. His command becomes at the very same time timid and hard; already he no longer feels for his servants the protective and benevolent sentiments that always arise from a long-standing, uncontested power, and he is astonished that having himself changed, his servant changes. He wants his servant, who is only so to speak passing through domestic service, to contract regular and permanent habits, to show himself satisfied with and proud of a servile position, from which he must sooner or later emerge; he wants his servant to

devote himself to a man who can neither protect nor ruin him, and to become attached finally, by an eternal bond, to beings who resemble him and who do not last any longer than he does.

Among aristocratic peoples, it often happens that the condition of domestic service does not debase the souls of those who submit to it, because they do not know and do not imagine any others, and because the prodigious inequality that is exhibited between them and the master seems to them the necessary and inevitable result of some hidden law of Providence.

Under democracy, the condition of domestic service has nothing degrading about it, because it is freely chosen, temporarily adopted, because public opinion does not condemn it, and because it creates no permanent inequality between the servant and the master.[n]

But, during the passage from one social condition to another, a moment almost always comes when the minds of men vacillate between the aristocratic notion of subjection and the democratic notion of obedience.

Obedience then loses its morality in the eyes of the one who obeys; he no longer considers it as an obligation in a way divine, and he does not yet see it in its purely human aspect; in his eyes it is neither holy or just, and he submits to it as to a degrading and useful fact.

At that moment, the confused and incomplete image of equality presents itself to the mind of the servants; they do not at first discern if it is in the very condition of domestic service or outside of it that this equality to which they have a right is found, and at the bottom of their hearts they revolt against an inferiority to which they have subjected themselves and from which they profit. They consent to serve, and they are ashamed to obey [<and while the masters still refuse to acknowledge equality outside of domestic service, the second want to find it even within these very limits>]; they love the advantages of servitude, but not the master, or, to say it better, they are not sure if they should not be the masters, and they are disposed to consider the one who commands them as the unjust usurper of their right.

n. In the margin, with a bracket that includes this paragraph and one part of the preceding one: "<This is, I believe, the return of an idea already expressed in the chapter. See.>"

That is when you see in the house of each citizen something analogous to the sad spectacle that political society presents. A hidden and internal war goes on constantly between always suspicious and rival powers. The master shows himself ill-willed and soft, the servant ill-willed and intractable; the one wants to shirk constantly, by dishonest limitations, the obligation to protect and to pay, the other wants to shirk the obligation to obey. Between them the reins of domestic administration hang loose, and each one tries hard to seize them. The lines that divide authority from tyranny, liberty from license, right from fact, seem in their eyes muddled and confused, and no one knows precisely what he is, or what he can do, or what he should do.

Such a state is not democratic, but revolutionary.[o]

o. At the end of the manuscript:

Opinion of Louis on the chapter./

Praise.

The chapter contains a very large number of new ideas. The style is good.

Criticism.

The first pages do not grab the mind of the reader. In general all of the *aristocratic domestic service* is of less intense interest than the rest. That is due not to the fact that the ideas are known, but to the theoretical way of presenting them.

According to Louis, I have made the *moral* condition of the servant in aristocracy worse than it was. But is he right?

The same reproach applies, although to a lesser degree, to the whole piece.

It is done to please philosophical minds. It does not get down enough to the level of ordinary minds. The subject is such however to interest all minds. It is a chapter that all readers will like to read and will believe themselves able to understand. So it must be put within their reach or in relief, and it can be done so only by getting a bit into facts, examples, details and by keeping myself less in abstractions than I do.

In summary this chapter is a very good piece that must be kept with the idea that it needs to be revised./

The general order of the piece must be kept./

Observation of Édouard.

He finds the piece good, but he thinks that new efforts must be made to put in relief my ideas relative to *democratic domestic service,* to fix more firmly by stylistic artifices the mind of the reader on this point, to bring out better than I do what is gained and what is lost in this new state.

Édouard would like me to use more the example of the Americans to demonstrate, by example, what should happen in a society where the master and the domestic servant find themselves together in the same electoral college.

The difficulty is that I know only very imperfectly what they want me to say.

CHAPTER 6[a]

How Democratic Institutions and Mores Tend to Raise the Cost and Shorten the Length of Leases

What I said about servants and masters applies to a certain point to landowners and tenant farmers. The subject merits, however, to be considered separately.

In America, there are, so to speak, no tenant farmers; every man owns the field that he cultivates.

It must be recognized that democratic laws tend powerfully to increase the number of landowners and to decrease that of tenant farmers. Nonetheless, what is happening in the United States must be attributed much less to the new institutions of the country than to the country itself. In America land costs little, and everyone becomes a landowner easily. The land yields little, and its products can be shared by a landowner and a tenant farmer only with difficulty.

a. In aristocracies farm rents are paid not only in money, but in respect, in affection, in services. Under democracy they are paid only in money.

Since a permanent bond no longer exists between families and the land, the landowner and the tenant farmer are strangers who meet by chance to discuss a matter.

Since fortunes are becoming divided, the landowner always has a desire to acquire and fears losing. He rigorously stipulates everything to which he has a right.

The landowner and the tenant farmer have analogous habits of mind and an analogous social situation. Between two equal citizens in straitened circumstances, the object of a rental contract cannot be anything other than money.

When you have one hundred tenant farmers, you readily make pecuniary sacrifices to gain their goodwill. You do not care about the goodwill of a single tenant farmer.

When democracy has made the idea of instability penetrate all minds, you have an instinctive horror for a contract, even an advantageous one, that has to last a long time (YTC, CVf, pp. 40–41).

So America is unique in this as in other things; and it would be an error to take it as an example.

I think that in democratic countries as well as in aristocracies, landowners and tenant farmers will be found; but landowners and tenant farmers will not be bound together in the same way.

In aristocracies, farm rents are paid not only in money, but also in respect, in affection and in services. In democratic countries, they are paid only in money.[b] When patrimonies divide and change hands, and when the permanent relationship that existed between families and the land disappears, it is no longer anything except chance that puts the landowner and the

b. There are no drafts of this chapter in the *Rubish.* In the manuscript, on the other hand, you find a jacket with various notes and fragments. The first page specifies:

"Pieces that began the chapter and that I believe must be deleted; they had the purpose of explaining what happened under aristocracy. I was afraid that this perpetual return to two social states was monotonous.

"To review one last time." This jacket contains another version of the chapter, identical enough, except for the beginning:

> In aristocracies in which great estates exist and in which custom and law fix the ownership of these estates in the same families, the landowner, by renting his fields, does not have as his only goal, or even sometimes as his principal goal, to enrich himself. Several other concerns share his soul. The tenant farmers with whom he deals are not strangers in his eyes. Their ancestors lived with his; his children will grow up amid theirs. They are tied to him and he to them by a long chain of memories and hopes. So the landowner wants to have his rights not only to the rent that they promised him, but also to their respect and their love; and he thinks that he owes it to himself not to impose obligations which are too hard on these men among whom he lives every day and whose well-being or miseries are necessarily before his eyes; and he is able to do so, for he enjoys an immense superfluity.
>
> The richest and most powerful landowner of an aristocratic country cannot do without zealous friends and faithful servants, tenants ready to serve him. All those men are like instruments by the aid of which he seizes the surrounding population and handles it as he wills. It is through them that he succeeds in enjoying the greatest non-material advantages that wealth assures. Thus their support must be bought.
>
> So in an aristocratic country the price of lands [v: tenant farms] is not paid only in money, but in respect, in affection, in services.
>
> It ceases to be so as patrimonies are divided, as fortunes become equal, as the bond that united the upper and the lower classes comes to loosen <and as the relationship that existed between political power and possession of the land comes to disappear.>
>
> When patrimonies . . .

tenant farmer in contact. They join together for a moment to debate the conditions of the contract, and afterward lose sight of each other. They are two strangers brought together by interest who rigorously discuss a matter that concerns only money.

As property is divided and wealth is dispersed here and there over the whole surface of the country, the State fills with men whose old wealth is in decline and with the newly rich whose needs increase faster than their resources. For all of them, the least profit is of consequence, and no one among them feels disposed to allow any one of his advantages to escape, or to lose any portion whatsoever of his income.

Since ranks are mingling and the very greatest as well as the very smallest fortunes are becoming rarer, there is less distance every day between the social condition of the landowner and that of the tenant farmer; the one does not naturally have an undisputed superiority over the other. Now, between two equal men in straitened circumstances, what can the subject of a rental contract be, if not money?[c]

A man whose property is an entire district and who owns one hundred small farms understands that it is a matter of winning the hearts of several thousand men at the same time; this seems to him to merit his efforts. To attain such a great objective, he easily makes sacrifices.

The one who owns a hundred acres is not burdened by such concerns; it is hardly important for him to win the particular goodwill of his tenant.

An aristocracy does not die like a man, in a day. Its principle is destroyed slowly deep within souls, before being attacked in the laws. So a long time before war breaks out against an aristocracy, you see the bond that until then united the upper classes to the lower loosen little by little. Indifference and scorn betray one side; jealousy and hate, the other. Relations between the poor and the rich become rarer and less mild; the cost of leases rises. It is not yet the result of the democratic revolution, but it is the sure sign of it. For an aristocracy that has allowed the heart of the people to escape

c. "In the work of Candolle on the subjects of gold and silver, there are on the long leases of feudal times curious remarks that prove that leases *rise* and *become shorter* as equality increases. As conditions become equal, the costs of leases rise" (YTC, CVa, p. 31).

definitively from its hands, is like a tree with dead roots; the higher it is, the more easily is it toppled by the winds.

For fifty years, the cost of farm rents has grown prodigiously, not only in France, but in most of Europe. The singular progress made by agriculture and industry during the same period is not enough, in my mind, to explain this phenomenon. You must resort to some other more powerful and more hidden cause. I think that this cause must be sought in the democratic institutions that several European peoples have adopted and in the democratic passions that more or less agitate all the others.

I have often heard great English landowners congratulate themselves that, in our times, they draw much more money from their estates than their fathers did.[d]

Perhaps they are right to be pleased; but certainly they do not know what they are pleased about. They think they are making a clear profit, and they are only making an exchange. It is their influence that they are giving up for cash; and what they gain in money, they are soon going to lose in power.

There is still another sign by which you can easily recognize that a great democratic revolution is being accomplished or is being prepared.

In the Middle Ages, nearly all the land was rented in perpetuity, or at least at very long term. When you study the domestic economy of that time, you see that leases of ninety-nine years were more frequent than those of twelve years are today.

Everyone believed then in the immortality of families; conditions seemed fixed forever, and the whole society appeared so immobile that no one imagined that anything ever had to move within it.

d. Inside the jacket of the manuscript that contains the drafts:

In aristocracies, the clauses of the lease are generally debated between a poor man to whom necessity has taught the importance of the smallest details, and a rich man who is accustomed to seeing everything broadly and to scorning small gains. The one treats the affair with all the fierceness given by need, and the other with the nonchalance suggested in such matters by a great superfluity. It is easy to foresee that the interest of the rich man must succumb in this unequal struggle.

In democracy, on the contrary, the landowner and the tenant bring the same needs and same desires.

In centuries of equality, the human mind takes a different turn. It easily believes that nothing is unchanging. The idea of instability possesses it.

In this frame of mind, the landowner and the tenant himself feel a sort of instinctive horror for long-term obligations; they fear being limited one day by an agreement that they profit from today. They vaguely expect some sudden and unforeseen change in their condition. They are afraid of themselves; they fear that, when their taste changes, they will be distressed by not being able to leave what was the object of their desires, and they are right to fear it; for in democratic centuries, what is most changeable, amid the movement of things, is the heart of man.

CHAPTER 7[a]

Influence of Democracy on Salaries

Most of the remarks that I made previously, when talking about servants and masters, can be applied to masters and workers.[b]

a. Democracy has a general and permanent tendency to bring the worker and master closer and to equalize their profits more and more.

[In the margin: Chapter that it is not certain that I will include.]

This is the general rule, but in industry, such as it is constituted today in some of its parts, the opposite is seen.

That is an exceptional fact, but very formidable and that much more formidable as it is exceptional (YTC, CVf, p. 41).

On the jacket of the manuscript:

The question of knowing whether I should let this chapter remain is still doubtful and needs to be asked of B[eaumont (ed.)]. and L[ouis (ed.)]./

The subject can seem known and yet redundant because of chapter 34 quarto where the matter is already treated./

This chapter has the disadvantage of posing the greatest question of our time without even trying to resolve it. You are disappointed after reading it.

Chapter 34 quarto corresponds to chapter 20 of the second part of volume III, on the industrial aristocracy.

b. What I say about the servant always more or less applies to the worker. But democracy tends, more and more, to isolate the latter from the master, and while separating him from the master, to raise him to the same level.

Tendency of democracy to raise salaries, to make the worker share in the profits.

How in the current state of commercial science and habits there is an opposite tendency that accumulates capital in the hands of a few great manufacturers and reduces the workers to the greatest dependency and to the most extreme poverty.

That this tendency is already noticeable in the United States, although in a much less pronounced way than in France, and above all in England. To find out why? That it is there .-.-.-.-.-.- democracy that fills the world. It is the only door open in the future to the re-formation of an aristocratic society.

As [<{conditions become equal}; as ranks blend and>] the rules of social hierarchy are less observed, while the great descend, the small rise and poverty as well as wealth ceases to be hereditary, you see the distance that separates the worker from the master decrease every day in fact and in opinion.

The worker conceives a higher idea of his rights, of his future, of himself; a new ambition, new desires fill him, new needs assail him. At every moment, he casts eyes full of covetousness on the profits of those who employ him; in order to come to share them, he tries hard to set his work at the highest price, and he usually ends by succeeding in doing so.

[Thus equality of conditions tends to lead to the gradual elevation of salaries, and in turn, the elevation of salaries constantly increases equality of conditions. So the slow and progressive augmentation of salaries seems to me one of the general laws that govern democratic societies.

But, in our times, a great and unfortunate exception presents itself.

I showed in the first part of this work how *a few* of the principles of aristocracy, after being chased away from political society found refuge in the industrial world. This profoundly modifies, but only in *some* points, the general truth that I announced above.][c]

In democratic countries, as elsewhere, most industries are conducted at little cost by men not placed by wealth and enlightenment above the common level of those they employ. These entrepreneurs of industry are very numerous; their interests differ; [their number varies and is constantly re-

Democracy pushes toward commerce and commerce remakes an aristocracy.

This danger cannot be averted except by the discovery of means (associations or others) by the aid of which you could do commerce without accumulating as much capital in the same hands.

Immense question.

I believe that I would do well to touch upon these questions, to cast the most penetrating glance that I could at them, but without stopping there. They demand a book themselves (*Rubish,* 2).

c. In the margin: "<Perhaps instead of putting the general ideas separately in the first volume, they should energetically and in a few words be explained here. The more I think about it, the more I am of this opinion. I am leaving the notes for this part nearby.>"

newed] so they cannot easily agree among themselves and combine their efforts.

On the other side, almost all the workers have some assured resources that allow them to refuse their services when someone does not want to give them what they consider as just payment for their work.

In the continual struggle that these two classes wage over salaries, strength is therefore divided; successes alternate.

It is even to be believed that in the long run the interest of the workers must prevail; for the high salaries that they have already gained make them less dependent every day on their masters, and the more independent they are, the more easily they can gain an increase in salaries.

I will take as example the industry that today is still the most practiced among us, as among nearly all the nations of the world: the cultivation of the land.

In France, most of those who rent their services to cultivate the soil themselves possess a few parcels, which if necessary, allow them to subsist without working for others. When the latter come to offer their hands to the great landowner or to a neighboring farmer, and they refuse to give them a certain salary, they withdraw to their small domain and wait for another occasion to present itself.[d]

I think that by taking these things as a whole, you can say that the slow and progressive elevation of salaries is one of the general laws that govern democratic societies. As conditions become more equal, salaries rise, and the higher salaries are, the more equal conditions become.

But, in our times, a great and unfortunate exception is found.

d. The four paragraphs that follow are missing in the manuscript. In their place you find the following paragraph:

> But there are in our times *certain* very important industries that must from the start be undertaken as *large,* with great capital, numerous relationships and a great credit, in order to pursue them profitably. In these industries, the master provides at *great* expense the raw material and the tools; the workers give only their *labor.* You understand from the first that the industrial entrepreneurs should necessarily expect great profits, for without that, they would remain idle and would not risk their acquired wealth for a small gain.
>
> As it is necessary to be already . . .

I showed, in a preceding chapter,[e] how aristocracy, chased from political society, withdrew into certain parts of the industrial world, and there established its dominion under another form.

This powerfully influences the level of salaries.[f]

As it is necessary to be already very rich in order to undertake the great industries I am talking about, the number of those who undertake them is very small. Being few, they can easily be in league with each other, and set the price that they please for work.[g]

e. In a first version, in the *rubish,* you find here this note: "This chapter is the [blank (ed.)] of the first volume. It was not found in the edition of 1834 [*sic*] and was only inserted since" (*Rubish,* 2).

f. "All societies that are born begin by organizing themselves aristocratically. Industry is subject to this law at this moment.

"Industry today shows all the advantages and all the disadvantages inherent in aristocracy."

"June 1838" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 12). See note b of p. 980.

g. 1. Why can I call the constitution of a certain industry aristocratic?

2. Why does this constitution tend to drive down salaries? What it has of aristocratic.

It can only be exercised by a small number of men, because in order to profit from this industry, you must have great capital, a great credit, very extensive relationships.

It places a few owners called manufacturers opposite a multitude of proletarians called workers who work in the factory as the agricultural population cultivated the land three centuries ago, without spirit of ownership and without gradual participation in the profits./

No permanent bond between poor and rich./

The poor become rich with difficulty, but the rich become poor easily, and if they remained rich, they would not always be in contact with the same poor./

.-.-.-.- Since the manufacturers are very few, they can easily come to an agreement and pay only a certain price for work and, if anyone refuses the conditions they propose, they can wait without ruining themselves. While the workers can reach such an agreement only with difficulty; and they die of hunger if they do not succeed in their project at the first blow./

Moreover, these are labors of a particular type that give to the body special habits that make it unsuitable to something else./

What it has of democratic.

Wealth accumulated in this way does not establish family. It forms an exception in the general system and does not take long to submit to the common law. There

Their workers are, on the contrary, in very great number, and the quantity grows constantly; for extraordinary prosperity arrives from time to time during which salaries rise beyond measure and attract the surrounding population to manufacturing. Now, once men have entered this career, we have seen that they cannot come out of it, because they do not take long to contract the habits of body and mind that make them unsuited to any other labor.[h] These men in general have little enlightenment, industry and resources; so they are almost at the mercy of their master. When competition or other fortuitous circumstances make the gains of the latter decrease, he can restrict their salaries almost at will, and easily regain from them what fortune has taken away from him.

If by common agreement they refuse work, the master, who is a rich man, can easily wait, without ruining himself, until necessity leads them back to him; but they must work every day in order to live, for they have hardly any other property except their hands. Oppression has already for a long time impoverished them, and they are easier to oppress as they become poorer. It is a vicious circle from which they can in no way emerge.

[Thus, while in the rest of society ranks mingle each day and conditions become closer, an immense distance, greater every day, separates the servant and the master here. Their position, their future, their tastes, their mores differ profoundly. Nothing in their lot is similar. Between these two men, contact is purely material; their souls do not know each other. <The master has only a confused idea of the needs, the sufferings and the joys of the worker. So he can feel for him only a little sympathy; in his eyes, the worker is not his fellow, not even his neighbor, for Christian charity hardly warms

are great manufacturing fortunes, but there are no manufacturing families, nor even a manufacturing class that has its separate spirit, traditions, tastes.

If the children of the rich manufacturer constantly fall back into the crowd, every day out of the crowd arise men who take their place; thus there is never any classification or immobility in the social body, which forms nonetheless the characteristics (*Rubish,* 2).

h. "In a textile mill, on the contrary, the worker is a poor devil who owns only his hands and who needs them every day" (*Rubish,* 2).

hearts in our time.> So in these industries, the master finds himself with regard to his workers in a position analogous to the one formerly occupied by the great landed proprietor vis-à-vis the agricultural class. With this difference, nonetheless, that the aristocracy based on trade establishes no solid bond of memory, affection, and interest with the population that surrounds it; that it hardly ever settles in a permanent manner amid the surrounding population and that its goal is not to govern that population, but to make use of it.][j]

So you should not be astonished if salaries, after sometimes rising suddenly, go down here in a permanent way, while in other professions, the cost of labor, which in general grows only little by little, increases constantly.

This state of dependence and misery in which a part of the industrial population finds itself in our time is an exceptional fact contrary to all that surrounds it; but for this very reason, there is no fact more serious, or one that better deserves to attract the particular attention of the legislator; for it is difficult, when the whole society moves, to hold one class immobile, and it is difficult, when the greatest number constantly open new roads to fortune, to make a few endure their needs and their desires in peace.

j. In the margin: "<I am afraid that I said almost the same things in the same words in another place. *To verify.*>"

CHAPTER 8[a]

Influence of Democracy on the Family[b]

I have just examined how, among democratic peoples, and in particular among the Americans, equality of conditions modifies the relationships of citizens with each other.

a. After showing how equality modified the relationships of citizens, I want to penetrate further and show how it acts on the relationships of family members.

The father in the aristocratic family is not only the author of the family, he is its political head, the pontiff. . . .

Democracy destroys everything political and conventional that there was in his authority, but it does not destroy this authority; it only gives it another character.

The magistrate has disappeared, the father remains.

The same thing with brothers, the artificial bond that united brothers in the aristocratic family is destroyed. The natural bond becomes stronger.

This is applicable to all associations based on natural sentiments. Democracy relaxes social bonds, it tightens natural bonds (YTC, CVf, pp. 41–42).

b. On a jacket containing the manuscript of this chapter:

This chapter seems to me to contain some good things, but it was done by fits and starts, languidly and slowly. It demands to be reviewed all at once in order for the thought to circulate more easily. Review the *rubish* carefully./

Development a bit didactic and a bit heavy. If I could delete the *aristocratic* as much as possible and allow the *mind* of the reader to re-do what I remove. That would be much better."

Note in the *rubish:* "The difficulty is that I do not know well what the intimate relationships of father and sons and of brothers among themselves are in America and that I can hardly speak except about France. I believe these relationships not hostile, but very cold in America" (*Rubish,* 2). On the family as antidote to the "democratic disease" see F. L. Morton, "Sexual Equality and the Family in Tocqueville's *Democracy in America,*" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XVII, no. 2 (1984): 309–24; and Laura Janara, *Democracy Growing Up. Authority, Autonomy and Passion in Tocqueville's "Democracy in America"* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

I want to penetrate further, and enter the bosom of the family. My goal here is not to look for new truths, but to show how facts already known are related to my subject.

Everyone has noticed that in our time new relationships have been established among the different members of the family, that the distance that formerly separated the father from his son has diminished, and that paternal authority has been, if not destroyed, at least altered.

Something analogous, but still more striking, is seen in the United States.

In America, the family, taking this word in its Roman and aristocratic sense, does not exist.[c] Some remnants are found only during the first years following the birth of the children. The father then exercises, without opposition, the domestic dictatorship that the weakness of his sons requires and that their interest, as well as his incontestable superiority, justifies.[d]

c. Former beginning of the chapter in the *rubish:*

There is a perpetual reaction of mores on the mind and of the mind on mores.

If you carefully studied the private [v: interior and exterior] life of the Americans, you would not fail to discover in a multitude of details the more or less distant effects of the philosophical method that they have adopted.

But such a study would take me too far away. I want to limit myself to providing a small number [of (ed.)] examples. I will show a few links, the detached mind of the reader will grasp the chain.

When men have accepted as general principle that it is good to judge everything by yourself, taking the opinion of others as information and not as rule, the relationship of the father with his children, of the master with his servants, and generally of the superior with the inferior finds itself changed.

[In the margin: Religion is a refuge where the human mind rests.

Politics forms an arena in which in the United States the majority, despite its desires, binds it and tires it out by its very inaction.]

Nothing is more visible than this in America.

In the United States, the family . . .

This fragment belongs to the single sheet found in a jacket on which you can read on the cover: "<S>

"It would be good to leave this small chapter after philosophical method in order to show its consequences. I would say at the end that what I had said about the relationship of the father and the sons extends to that of servants and masters and in general to all superiors and inferiors, as we will see elsewhere. This chapter is good" (*Rubish,* 2).

d. The manuscript says "legitimates."

But from the moment when the young American approaches manhood, the bonds of filial obedience loosen day by day. Master of his thoughts, the young American is soon master of his conduct. In America, there is no adolescence strictly speaking. Coming out of childhood, the man is revealed and begins to follow his own path.

You would be wrong to believe that this happens following a domestic struggle, in which the son gained, by a kind of moral violence, the liberty that his father refused to him. The same habits, the same principles that push the son to seize independence, dispose the other to consider the use of that independence as an incontestable right.

So you notice in the first none of these wild passions, full of hatred, that agitate men for a long time after they have escaped from an established power. The second does not feel those regrets, full of bitterness and anger, that usually outlast the deposed power. The father saw from afar the limits at which his authority had to expire; and when time has brought him to those limits, he abdicates without difficulty. The son foresaw in advance the precise period when his own will would become his rule, and he takes hold of liberty without rushing and without effort, as a good that he is due and that no one seeks to take away from him.[1]

1. *The Americans, however, have not yet imagined, as we have in France, removing from fathers one of the principal elements of power, by taking away from them their liberty to dispose of their property after death. In the United States, the right to make out your will is unlimited.*

In that as in all the rest, it is easy to notice that, if the political legislation of the Americans is much more democratic than ours, our civil legislation is infinitely more democratic than theirs. That is easily understood.

The author of our civil legislation was a man who saw his interest in satisfying the democratic passions of his contemporaries in everything that was not directly and immediately hostile to his power. He willingly allowed a few popular principles to rule property and govern families, provided that you did not want to introduce them into the conduct of the State. While the democratic torrent filled the civil laws, he hoped to keep himself easily sheltered behind the political laws. This view is at the same time full of cleverness and egoism; but such a compromise could not last. For, in the long run, political society cannot fail to become the expression and the image of civil society; and it is in this sense that you can say that there is nothing more political among a people than the civil legislation.[e]

e. In the manuscript this note appears above, at the word "path." At this place you find, instead, this other note:

Pieces that probably must be put in notes at the bottom of the pages of this chapter./

Note (B)./

I know that something analogous to what I have just said shows itself in England, one of the countries in the world where until today aristocracy has preserved the most dominion, and paternal authority the least power. From this juxtaposition you could conclude that the sentiment of independence in children is more English than democratic, and that it is due less to the habits of equality that have been contracted in the United States than to the political liberty that reigns there.

I do not think that it is so.

The bonds that hold together the various elements of the family seem to me still much less tight among the Americans than among the English, and they loosen visibly among the latter as their laws and their mores become more democratic. The result, it seems to me, is that if it is true that a certain sentiment of independence can exist within a family without equality reigning in the State, at least it must be recognized that democracy favors and develops it.

You must not forget, moreover, that England is a very aristocratic country in the middle of which a great number of democratic ideas have circulated from time immemorial and whose laws have always been intermingled with some institutions appropriate only to democracy.

What is the sovereign rule of public [v: national] opinion to which all the English of the last [century (ed.)] constantly declared that you must submit, if not a still obscure notion of the democratic dogma of the sovereignty of the people?

What does this general principle mean that the money of those paying taxes, whoever they are, can only be taxed when the latter have themselves or by their representatives voted the tax, if not the explicit recognition of the democratic right of all to participate in the government?

If I glance generally at English society, I see clearly that the aristocracy leads the State and directs the provinces, but if I look within the administration of the parishes, I discover that there at least the entire society governs itself; I see that everything comes from it [v: the people] and returns to it.[1] I notice officers who, freely elected by the universality of citizens, are occupied with the poor, inspect the roads, direct the affairs of the church, administer in an almost sovereign way common property. The authority created in this way is very limited, I admit, but it is essentially democratic. Expand the circle of attributions and you will believe yourself suddenly transported to one of the towns of Massachusetts {New England}.

These *reflections,* which came in relation to a detail, could serve to explain many important things that are happening at this moment before our eyes.

So nothing that is taking place today among the English is an entirely new development. The English are not creating democracy, they are expanding in England the democratic spirit and democratic customs.

(1) <Here a note. Ask Reeve.>

It is perhaps useful to demonstrate how these changes that took place in the family are closely tied to the social and political revolution that is finally being accomplished before our eyes.[f]

There are certain great social principles that a people apply everywhere or allow to subsist nowhere.

In countries organized aristocratically and hierarchically, power never addresses itself directly to the whole of the governed. Since men depend on each other, you limit yourself to leading the first ones. The rest follow. This applies to the family, as to all associations that have a head. Among aristocratic peoples, society knows, strictly speaking, only the father. It holds onto the sons only by the hands of the father; it governs him and he governs them. So the father has not only a natural right. He is given a political right to command. He is the author and the sustainer of the family; he is also its magistrate.

In democracies, where the arm of the government goes to find each man in particular in the middle of the crowd in order to bend him separately to the common laws, there is no need for such an intermediary; the father is, in the eyes of the law, only a citizen older and richer than his sons.

When most conditions are very unequal, and when inequality of conditions is permanent, the idea of the superior grows in the imagination of men; should the law not grant him prerogatives, custom and opinion concede them to him.[g] When, on the contrary, men differ little from each other and do not always remain dissimilar, the general notion of the superior

See the letter of Henry Reeve to Tocqueville (London, 29 March 1836, YTC, CVa, pp. 41–44); published by James T. Schleifer in "Tocqueville and Centralization: Four Previously Unpublished Manuscripts," *Yale University Library Gazette* 58, nos. 1–2 (1983): 33–36; and Tocqueville's response (*Correspondance anglaise, OC,* VI, 1, pp. 29–30).

f. The following paragraph replaces this passage of the manuscript: "Thus at the same time that great changes are taking place today in society, changes no less great are taking place in the family.

"It is perhaps useful to demonstrate how these two things are connected and to show what the causes and the limits are of the democratic revolution that is finally being accomplished before our eyes."

g. In the margin: "<Should this sentence be included?/

"The great power that the father exercises in aristocratic countries takes its source not only in a law and in a custom. The spirit {the ensemble} of all the customs and all the laws comes to his aid.>"

becomes weaker and less clear; in vain does the will of the legislator try hard to place the one who obeys far below the one who commands; mores bring these two men closer to each other and draw them every day toward the same level.

So if I do not see, in the legislation of an aristocratic people, particular privileges accorded to the head of the family, I will not fail to be assured that his power is very respected and more extensive than within a democracy; for I know that, whatever the laws, the superior will always seem higher and the inferior lower in aristocracies than among democratic peoples.

When men live in the memory of what was rather than in the preoccupation with what is, and when they are much more concerned about what their ancestors thought than about trying to think for themselves, the father is the natural and necessary bond between the past and the present, the link where these two chains end and join together.[h] In aristocracies, the father is therefore not only the political head of the family; he is the organ of traditions, the interpreter of customs, the arbiter of mores. You listen to him with deference; you approach him only with respect, and the love that you give him is always tempered by fear.

When the social state becomes democratic, and men adopt as general principle that it is good and legitimate to judge everything for yourself while taking ancient beliefs as information and not as a rule, the power of opinion exercised by the father over the sons, as well as his legal power, becomes less great.

The division of patrimonies that democracy brings contributes perhaps more than all the rest to changing the relationships of father and children.

When the father of the family has little property, his son and he live constantly in the same place and are busy together with the same work.

h. "I saw a commune in France in which the inhabitants did not go to church on Sunday. But they filled the cemetery on All Souls' Day; their beliefs revived suddenly at the memory of the family members they had lost; and they felt the need to pray for them, even when they forgot to do it for themselves.

"To put in the place where I say that democracy makes the sentiments of family milder. If I must say so, a touching tableau can be made there in a few words" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 18).

Habit and need draw them closer and force them to communicate with each other at every moment; so a sort of familial intimacy cannot fail to be established between them, which makes authority less absolute, and which is badly adapted to external forms of respect.[j]

Now, among democratic peoples, the class that possesses these small fortunes is precisely the one that empowers ideas and shapes mores. It at the same time makes its opinions, like its will, prevail everywhere, and even those who are most inclined to resist its commands end up letting themselves be led by its examples. I have seen fiery enemies of democracy who had their children address them with *tu* [the familiar form].

Thus, at the same time that power is escaping from aristocracy, you see disappear what there was of [the] austere, conventional and legal in paternal power, and a kind of equality becomes established around the domestic hearth.

I do not know if, everything considered, society loses with this change; but I am led to believe that the individual gains. I think that as mores and laws are more democratic, the relationships of father and son become more intimate and milder; rule and authority are encountered less often; confidence and affection are often greater, and it seems that the natural bond tightens, while the social bond loosens.

In the democratic family, the father exercises hardly any power other than the one that you are pleased to grant to the tenderness and experience of an old man. His orders would perhaps be unrecognized; but his advice is usually full of power. If he is not surrounded by official respect, his sons at least approach him with confidence. There is no recognized formula for speaking to him; but he is spoken to constantly and readily consulted every day. The master and the magistrate have disappeared; the father remains.

It is sufficient, to judge the difference between these two social states on this point, to skim through the domestic correspondence that aristocracies

j. In a variant: "The relationships of a rich man with his family are rare and solemn. He only appears surrounded by a sort of domestic pomp; his sons see him only from afar. Business, pleasures, a tutor and valets separate him from them. Now, in aristocracy, the rich form a separate corps and a permanent association, and they regulate customs as well as laws."

have left us. The style is always correct, ceremonial, rigid, and so cold that the natural warmth of the heart can hardly be felt through the words.

There reigns, in contrast, in all the words that a son addresses to his father, among democratic peoples, something free, familiar, and tender at the same time that reveals at first glance that new relationships have been established within the family.

[Here, moreover, as elsewhere, the democratic revolution is accompanied and sometimes followed by great excesses.

When the barriers that separated the different members of the family go down, before new limits are yet fixed and well-known, it often happens that the father and the children mix in a kind of unnatural equality and gross familiarity. The father is then no longer a tender, *but* grave and a bit austere friend; he is a joyful companion of pleasure and sometimes a vile comrade of debauchery. He does not work to elevate the reason of his sons to the level of his. To please them better, he reduces his maturity to the level of their juvenile passions.

This is anarchy and corruption, and not democracy.][k]

An analogous revolution modifies the mutual relationships of the children.

In an aristocratic family, as well as in aristocratic society, all the places are marked. Not only does the father there occupy a separate rank and enjoy immense privileges; the children themselves are not equal to each other; age and gender fix irrevocably for each his rank and assure him certain prerogatives. Democracy overturns or reduces most of these barriers.

In the aristocratic family, the eldest of the sons, since he inherits the greatest part of the property and almost all the rights, becomes the head and to a certain point the master of his brothers. Greatness and power are his; mediocrity and dependence are theirs. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to believe that, among aristocratic peoples, the privileges of the eldest were advantages to him alone, and that they excited around him only envy and hate.

k. In the margin: "<Piece not to include, I believe, because it reproduces in a monotonous way the idea of the transitional period that is found in several chapters and notably in the preceding chapter.>"

The eldest usually tries hard to obtain wealth and power for his brothers, because the general splendor of the house is reflected on the one who represents it; and the younger brothers try to facilitate all the enterprises of the eldest, because the grandeur and strength of the head of the family make him more and more able to elevate all the branches.

So the various members of the aristocratic family are very tightly bound together; their interests go together, their minds are in agreement; but it is rare that their hearts understand each other.

Democracy also joins the brothers to each other; but it goes about it in another way.

Under democratic laws, the children are perfectly equal, consequently independent; nothing necessarily draws them closer together, but also nothing pushes them apart; and since they have a common origin, grow up under the same roof, are the object of the same concerns, and since no particular prerogative differentiates or separates them, you see arising easily among them the sweet and youthful intimacy of childhood. With the bond thus formed at the beginning of life, occasions for breaking that bond hardly present themselves, for fraternity draws them closer each day without hampering them.

So it is not by interests, it is by the community of memories and the free sympathy of opinions and tastes that democracy attaches brothers to each other. It divides their inheritance, but it allows their souls to blend.

The sweet pleasure of these democratic mores is so great that the partisans of aristocracy themselves allow themselves to adopt it, and after enjoying it for a time, they are not tempted to return to the respectful and cold forms of the aristocratic family. They willingly keep the domestic habits of democracy, provided that they can reject its social state and its laws. But these things go together, and you cannot enjoy the first without undergoing the others.

What I have just said about filial love and fraternal tenderness must be understood about all the passions that spontaneously have their sources in nature itself.

When a certain way of thinking or of feeling is the product of a particular state of humanity, once this state changes, nothing remains. Thus, the law can tie two citizens very closely together; once the law is abolished, they

separate [and again become strangers]. There was nothing tighter than the knot that joined the vassal to the lord in the feudal world. Now these two men no longer know each other. The fear, the recognition and the love that formerly bound them have disappeared. You do not find a trace of them.

But it is not so with the natural sentiments of the human species. It is rare that the law, by trying hard to bend those sentiments in a certain way, does not weaken them, that by wanting to add to them, the law does not take something away from them, and that, left to themselves, those sentiments are not always stronger.

Democracy, which destroys or obscures nearly all the old social conventions and prevents men from stopping easily at new ones, makes most of the sentiments that arise from these conventions disappear entirely. But it only modifies the others, and often it gives them an energy and a sweetness that they did not have.

I think that it is not impossible to contain in a single sentence the entire meaning of this chapter and of several others that precede it. Democracy loosens social bonds, but it tightens natural bonds. It brings family members closer together at the same time that it separates citizens.

[This in my view is one of the most incontestable advantages of democratic institutions. When men are naturally strangers [v: far apart], it can be good to draw them toward each other and tie them together in an artificial way. But when they are naturally close and keep together, the science of the legislator rarely adds to their union and can harm it.][m]

m. In the margin: "<That is not the place.>"

CHAPTER 9[a]

Education of Young Girls in the United States[b]

There have never been free societies without morals, and as I said in the first part of this work, it is the woman who molds the morals. So everything that influences the condition of women, their habits and their opinions, has a great political interest in my view.[c]

a. "Liberty of young girls in the United States.

"Firmness and coldness of their reason. They have pure morals rather than chaste minds.

"The Americans wanted them to regulate themselves. They made a constant appeal to their individual reason.

"Democratic education necessary to keep women from the dangers that arise from democratic mores" (YTC, CVf, p. 42). The ideas of this chapter appear almost literally in *Marie* (I, pp. 18–32). Tocqueville had already sketched the general features of the chapter on American women in a letter of 28 November 1831 to his sister-in-law, Émilie (YTC, BIa2). The question had been considered as well at the time of his conversations with Lieber and Gallatin (non-alphabetic notebooks 1, 2 and 3, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 61 and 93).

b. On the jacket which contains the manuscript: "Perhaps join 43 and 44 in the same chapter." This chapter bears number 43 in the manuscript. Number 44 corresponds to the following chapter. The notes and drafts of this chapter and the following ones are scattered in several jackets of the *Rubish.*

c. At first this chapter began thus:

> Nothing struck me more [v: I was strongly] [In the margin: <I have already said that several times.>] in America than the condition of women and I ask permission of the reader to stop a few moments at this subject. There have never been free societies without morals, and, as I said in the first part of this work, it is the woman who molds the morals. So everything that influences the condition of women, their habits and their opinions, has a great political interest in my view.
>
> The Protestant religion professes higher esteem for the wisdom of man than Catholicism does. It shows a much greater confidence in the light of individual reason.
>
> Protestantism is a democratic doctrine that preceded and facilitated the establish-

Among nearly all the Protestant nations, young girls are infinitely more in control of their actions than among Catholic peoples.

This independence is still greater in Protestant countries that, like England, have kept or acquired the right to govern themselves. Liberty then penetrates the family by political habits and by religious beliefs.

In the United States, the doctrines of Protestantism come to combine with a very free constitution and a very democratic social state; and nowhere is the young girl more quickly or more completely left to herself.

A long time before the young American girl has reached nubile age, she begins to be freed little by little from maternal protection; she has not yet entirely left childhood when already she thinks by herself, speaks freely and acts alone; the great world scene is exposed constantly before her; far from trying to hide it from her view, it is laid bare more and more every day before her sight, and she is taught to consider it with a firm and calm eye. Thus, the vices and perils presented by society do not take long to be revealed to her; she sees them clearly, judges them without illusion and faces them without fear; for she is full of confidence in her strength, and her confidence seems shared by all those who surround her.

So you must almost never expect to find with the American young girl this virginal guilelessness amid awakening desires, anymore than these naïve and ingenuous graces that usually accompany the European girl in the passage from childhood to youth. It is rare that the American, whatever her age, shows puerile timidity and ignorance. Like the European young girl, she wants to please, but she knows the cost precisely. If she does not give

ment of social and political equality. Men have, if I can say so, made democracy pass by heaven before establishing it on earth.

The practical differences of these different religious theories make themselves seen principally by the way in which the education of women is directed. For it is always in the circle of the family and domestic affairs that religion exercises the most dominion.

[In the margin, with a bracket that includes the last three paragraphs and the following three: <Probably delete this. It is dangerous ground on which I should go only by necessity.>]

Among nearly all . . .

herself to evil, at least she knows about it; she has pure morals, rather than a chaste mind.

I was often surprised and almost frightened by seeing the singular dexterity and happy boldness with which the American young girls knew how to direct their thoughts and their words amid the pitfalls of a lively conversation; a philosopher would have stumbled a hundred times on the narrow path that they traveled without accident and without difficulty.

It is easy in fact to recognize that, even amid the independence of her earliest youth, the American girl never entirely ceases to be in control of herself; she enjoys all permitted pleasures without abandoning herself to any one of them, and her reason never relinquishes the reins, although it often seems to let them hang loosely.[d]

In France, where we still mix in such a strange way the debris of all the ages in our opinions and in our tastes, it often happens that we give women a timid, secluded and almost monastic education, as in the time of aristocracy; and we then abandon them suddenly, without guide and without help, amid the disorders inseparable from a democratic society.

The Americans are in better harmony with themselves.

They have seen that, within a democracy, individual independence could not fail to be very great, youth precocious, tastes badly restrained, custom changeable, public opinion often uncertain or powerless, paternal authority weak and marital power in question.[e]

In this state of things, they judged that there was little chance of being able to repress in the woman the most tyrannical passions of the human heart, and that it was surer to teach her the art of combatting them herself. As they could not prevent her virtue from often being in danger, they wanted her to know how to defend her virtue, and they counted more on the free effort of her will than on weakened or destroyed barriers. So instead of keeping her distrustful of herself, they try constantly to increase her

d. In the margin, beside an earlier version: "<≠Philosophers have argued among themselves for six thousand years to determine the precise limits that separate licentiousness from an innocent liberty, but here is a young girl who seems to have discovered this precise [v: delicate] point by herself and who settles herself there.≠>"

e. In the manuscript you find the word "limited."

confidence in her own strength. Having neither the possibility nor the desire to keep the young girl in a perpetual and complete ignorance, they hastened to give her a precocious knowledge of everything. Far from hiding the corrupt things of the world from her, they wanted her to see them first and train herself to flee them, and they preferred to guarantee her honesty than to respect her innocence too much.[f]

Although the Americans are a strongly religious people, they did not rely on religion alone to defend the virtue of the woman; they sought to arm her reason. In this, as in many other circumstances, they followed the same

f. On a sheet of the manuscript which bears the title *"Rubish":*

≠Moreover you would be wrong to believe that in the United States reason alone is relied on to guide and assure the first steps of the young girl [in the margin: the general independence of the mind and the Christian faith on certain specific dogmas].

I said elsewhere how in democracies the spirit of religion and the spirit of liberty were marvelously combined. This idea constantly presents itself to me without my seeking it, and I find it at each turn of my subject.

In America religious belief has for a long time become a public opinion. It reigns despotically on the mind [v: intelligence] of the majority and uses democracy itself to limit the errors of democratic liberty in the moral world.

The Americans have made incredible efforts to get individual independence to regulate itself and it is only when they have finally arrived at the farthest limits of human strength that they have finally called religion to their aid and have had themselves sustained in its arms.≠

[In the margin: This entire page seems to me of the sort to be deleted. I have already spoken many times about the effects of religion. I will speak yet again about it when it concerns mores. ≠This last idea, moreover, makes the mind suddenly and disagreeably enter a path for which it is not prepared.≠]

In a rough draft of the *Rubish* the fragment continues in this way:

Thus, in whatever direction I turn my subject, I always notice the same objects at the end of the course that I want to follow. Always I see American liberty relying on faith and marching in concert with it. Thus I arrive by a new road at the point that I had already reached in another part of this work, and I conclude at this time as then that if nations subjected to an aristocracy or to a despot can, if need be, do without religious beliefs without ceasing to form a society, it cannot be the same for republican and democratic peoples; and that if the first must want to believe in order to find an alleviation for their miseries, the second need to believe in order to exist (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTER ON THE REGULARITY OF MORES, *Rubish,* 2).

method. They first made incredible efforts to get individual independence to regulate itself, and it is only after arriving at the farthest limits of human strength, that they finally called religion to their help [and made it sustain them in its arms].g

I know that such an education is not without danger; nor am I unaware that it tends to develop judgment at the expense of imagination, and to make honest and cold women rather than tender wives and amiable companions to man. If society is more tranquil and better ordered because of it, private life often has fewer charms. But those are secondary evils that must be faced because of a larger interest. Having come to the point where we are, we are no longer allowed to make a choice. A democratic education is needed to protect the woman from the perils with which the institutions and mores of democracy surround her.

[Fragment of *rubish* that was to have served to link this chapter to the one following.

> [The beginning is missing (ed.)] her family? To each she addresses a word, a smile, a look. Young men who met her in a public gathering approach her; and while walking, she converses familiarly with them. By the freedom of all her movements, you easily find that nothing in her actions should surprise those who see her or trouble herself. Liberty and at the same time the discreet reserve of her words show that, despite her young age, she has already ceased to see the world through the virginal veil of first innocence and that, if she has not yet learned at her expense to know human perversity, the example of others has at least been enough to teach her about it. Do not be afraid that the flow of a lively conversation will lead her beyond the limits of propriety; she is the mistress of her thought like all the rest, and she knows how to hold herself easily within the narrow space that separates innocent banter from licentious speech. Philosophers have argued among themselves for six thousand years to determine the precise point where virtue ends and vice begins, but here is a young girl who seems to have known how to separate them at first glance. Constantly, you see her approach with assurance these formidable limits that she almost never crosses.

g. In the margin: "<Must that be left?>"

Do you want more? Do you desire to know her better still? Follow her in these brilliant circles where, perhaps alone, she is going this evening. There you will be able to contemplate her in the full use of her independence and in all the splendor of triumph. That is where she enjoys beyond measure, you could almost say that she abuses without regret, the triple dominion given by spirit, youth and beauty. She carries along in her wake, she enlivens those around her. You say to her that she is beautiful, and she does not try to hide that she is pleased to receive these tributes that admiration lavishes on her. Some come forward to listen to her, others draw her aside in order to enjoy alone the pleasure of hearing her. She speaks about literature, politics, clothes, morals, love, religion, the fine arts, following the occasion of the moment and her desires. Sometimes she herself seems intoxicated by her own words.

But then where is her father? Enclosed in a dusty corner of his house, he is calculating . . . [large blank (ed.)]

And her mother? Her mother consecrates every instant to the care of a still young family; perhaps at this moment she is breast-feeding a twelfth infant just sent to her by Providence. The one, like the other, is little concerned about the actions of their daughter. Do not conclude that they are indifferent to her fate; they trust more in her precocious reason than in their surveillance.

<I am in truth sorry to find fortuitously a connection between something as gracious and as light as the emerging coquetry [v: innocent liberty] of a young girl and a matter as grave and as austere as philosophy, but the necessity of my subject forces me.

So I think, since it must be said, that it is in the philosophical method of the Americans that you must seek one of the first causes of this great liberty left to youth by a common [v: tacit] agreement.

The inhabitants of the United States have accepted in a general manner that it was good not to chain the human mind by precedents and customs, that you must not bind the mind to form or enslave it to means, but that to a certain point it must be left to its natural independence, and you must allow each person to march toward truth by his own path.

Starting from this doctrine, they are not afraid to base society on foundations unknown to their predecessors. They have imposed new rules on comm[erce (ed.)] and uncovered new resources for human industry.

It is by virtue of this same doctrine that young American girls remain

themselves and can without shame obey the free impulses of their nature in everything that is not criminal.>

It is true that in America the independence of the woman becomes lost . . . (In the jacket entitled TO PROFIT FROM THE IDEAS OF THIS CHAPTER (IF I HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE IT) BY SEEING AGAIN THE CHAPTERS ON THE WOMAN, *Rubish,* 2).]

CHAPTER 10[a]

How the Young Girl Is Found Again in the Features of the Wife

In America, the independence of the woman becomes irretrievably lost amid the bonds of marriage. If the young girl is less restrained there than anywhere else, the wife submits to the most strict obligations. The one makes the paternal home a place of liberty and pleasure, the other lives in the house of her husband as in a cloister.[b]

These two conditions so different are perhaps not so contrary as you suppose, and it is natural that American women pass by the one in order to reach the other.

Religious peoples and industrial nations have a particularly serious idea of marriage. The first consider the regularity of the life of a woman as the best guarantee and the most certain sign of the purity of her morals. The others see in it the sure proof of the order and the prosperity of the house.

The Americans form at the very same time a Puritan nation and a commercial people; so their religious beliefs, as well as their industrial habits,

a. The American woman makes the house of her parents a place of liberty and pleasure. She leads a monastic life in the house of her husband.

These two conditions so different are less contrary than you imagine. American women pass naturally by the one in order to reach the other.

It is in the independence of their first youth and in the manly education that they then received that they have acquired the experience, the power over themselves and the (illegible word) with which they submit without hesitation and without complaint to the exigencies of the marriage state (YTC, CVf, p. 43).

b. To the side, in a first version: "An analogous spectacle is seen in England, with this difference nonetheless that the young girl there is less free and the woman less constrained than in the United States."

lead them to require from the woman an abnegation of herself and a continual sacrifice of her pleasures to her business, which it is rare to ask of her in Europe. Thus, an inexorable public opinion reigns in the United States that carefully encloses the woman in the small circle of domestic interests and duties, and that forbids her to go beyond it.[c]

Coming into the world, the young American woman finds these notions firmly established; she sees the rules that derive from them; she does not take long to be convinced that she cannot escape one moment from the customs of her contemporaries without immediately endangering her tranquillity, her honor and even her social existence, and in the firmness of her reason and in the manly habits that her education gave her, she finds the energy to submit.

You can say that it is from the practice of independence that she drew the courage to endure the sacrifice without struggle and without complaint, when the moment has come to impose it on herself.

The American woman, moreover, never falls into the bonds of marriage as into a trap set for her simplicity and ignorance. She has been taught in advance what is expected of her, and it is by herself and freely that she puts herself under the yoke. She courageously bears her new condition because she has chosen it.

As in America paternal discipline is very lax and the conjugal bond is very strict, it is only with circumspection and with fear that a young girl incurs it. Premature unions are scarcely seen. So American women marry only when their reason is trained and developed; while elsewhere most women begin to train and to develop their reason only in marriage.

I am, moreover, very far from believing that this great change that takes place in all the habits of women in the United States, as soon as they are married, must be attributed only to the constraint of public opinion. Often they impose it on themselves solely by the effort of their will.

When the time has arrived to choose a husband, this cold and austere

c. "From the moment when the world becomes commercial, the household is nothing more than a house of commerce, a name of a firm. K[ergorlay (ed.)]" (In the *rubish* of the chapter on the family, *Rubish,* 2).

reason, which the free view of the world has enlightened and strengthened, indicates to the American woman that a light and independent spirit in the bonds of marriage is a matter of eternal trouble, not of pleasure; that the amusements of the young girl cannot become the diversions of the wife, and that for the woman the sources of happiness are in the conjugal home. Seeing in advance and clearly the only road that can lead to domestic felicity, she takes it with her first steps, and follows it to the end without trying to go back.

This same vigor of will that the young wives of America display, by bowing suddenly and without complaint to the austere duties of their new state, is found as well in all the great trials of their life.

There is no country in the world where particular fortunes are more unstable than in the United States. It is not rare that, in the course of his existence, the same man climbs and again descends all the degrees that lead from opulence to poverty.

The women of America bear these [sudden] revolutions with a tranquil and indomitable energy. You would say that their desires narrow with their fortune, as easily as they expand.

Most of the adventurers who go each year to people the uninhabited areas of the west belong, as I said in my first work,[d] to the old Anglo-American race of the North. Several of these men who run with such boldness toward wealth already enjoyed comfort in their country. They lead their companions with them and make them share the innumerable perils and miseries that always signal the beginning of such enterprises. I often met at the limits of the wilderness young women who, after being raised amid all of the refinements of the great cities of New England, had passed, almost without transition, from the rich homes of their parents to a badly sealed hut in the middle of a wood. Fever, solitude, boredom had not broken the main springs of their courage. Their features seemed altered and faded, but their view was firm. They appeared at once sad and resolute.

d. See p. 458 of the second volume.

I do not doubt that these young American women had amassed, in their first education, this internal strength that they then used.

So the young girl in the United States is still found in the features of the wife; the role has changed, the habits differ, the spirit is the same.

CHAPTER II[a]

How Equality of Conditions Contributes to Maintaining Good Morals in America

There are philosophers and historians who have said, or implied, that women were more or less severe in their morals depending on whether they lived farther from or closer to the equator. That is getting out of the matter cheaply, and in this case, a globe and a compass would suffice to resolve in an instant one of the most difficult problems that humanity presents.

I do not see that this materialistic doctrine is established by the facts.

The same nations have shown themselves, in different periods of their history, chaste or dissolute. So the regularity or the disorderliness of their

a. Climate, race and religion are not enough to explain the great regularity of morals in the United States.

You must resort to the social and political state.

How democracy favors the regularity of morals.

1. It prevents disorderliness before marriage, because you can always marry.

2. It prevents it afterward.

1. Because you have loved and chosen each other and because it is to be believed that you suit each other.

2. Because if you were mistaken, public opinion no longer accepts that you fail to fulfill freely accepted commitments.

3. Other causes:

1. Continual occupation of men and women.

2. Nature of these occupations that removes the taste as well as the time to give themselves without restraint to their passions.

4. Why what is happening in Europe and in France is contrary to this, and this makes our morals become more lax as our social state more democratic (YTC, CVf, pp. 43–44).

morals is due to a few changeable causes, and not only to the nature of the country, which did not change.

I will not deny that, in certain climates, the passions that arise from the mutual attraction of the sexes are particularly ardent; but I think that this natural ardor can always be excited or restrained by the social state and the political institutions.

Although the travelers who have visited North America differ among themselves on several points, they all agree in noting that morals there are infinitely more severe than anywhere else.

It is clear that, on this point, the Americans are very superior to their fathers, the English. A superficial view of the two nations is enough to show it.[b]

In England, as in all the other countries of Europe, public spite is constantly brought to bear on the weaknesses of women. You often hear philosophers and statesmen complain that morals are not regular enough, and literature assumes it every day.

b. Good morals./

Democracy is favorable to good morals, even apart from religious beliefs. This is proved in two ways:

1. In England, same beliefs, but not the same morals. Recall on this subject the remark that I made in a letter to Basil Hall in which I said that, without allowing myself to judge alone the morals of American women and English women, I was however led to believe the first superior to the second. In America, no one allows himself to say a single word about the honor of women. Foreigners themselves keep quiet about it. I have even seen some corrupt enough to regret the purity of morals. All books, even novels, assume chaste women. In England, the dandies talk about getting lucky, philosophers complain that the morality of women is decreasing, foreigners tell racy escapades and books (illegible word) leave it to be assumed.

2. An aristocracy without beliefs (like that of France, for example, or that of England under Charles II). Nothing more excessive .-[you (ed.)].- then see what .-[the (ed.)].- aristocracy can do when it goes in the same direction as passions. The French aristocracy even when it was enlightened was still infinitely less regular than the American democracy.

[In the margin] Horrible excesses of the Roman aristocracy. See Properce (*Rubish,* 2). The letter to Basil Hall is cited in note d of p. 819.

In America, all books, without excepting novels, assume women to be chaste, and no one tells racy escapades.

This great regularity of American morals is undoubtedly due in part to the country, to race, to religion.[c] But all these causes, which are found elsewhere, are still not enough to explain it. For that you must resort to some particular reason.

This reason appears to me to be equality and the institutions that derive from it.

Equality of conditions does not by itself alone produce regularity of morals; but you cannot doubt that it facilitates and augments it.

Among aristocratic peoples, birth and fortune often make men and women beings so different that they can never succeed in uniting. Passions draw them together, but the social state and the ideas that the social state suggests prevent them from joining in a permanent and open way. From that a great number of fleeting and clandestine unions necessarily arise. Nature compensates in secret for the constraint that the laws impose.

The same thing does not happen when equality of conditions has made all the imaginary or real barriers that separate the man from the woman fall. There is then no young woman who does not believe herself able to become the wife of the man she prefers; this makes disorderliness in morals before marriage very difficult. For, whatever the credulity of passions, there is hardly any way for a woman to be persuaded that someone loves her when he is perfectly free to marry her and does not do so.

The same cause acts, although in a more indirect manner, in marriage.

Nothing serves better to legitimate illegitimate love in the eyes of those who feel it or in the eyes of the crowd who contemplate it, than forced unions or unions made by chance.[1]

c. "≠A believing democracy will always be more regular in its morals than a believing aristocracy≠" (*Rubish,* 2).

1. *It is easy to be convinced of this truth by studying the different literatures of Europe. When a European wants to retrace in his fiction a few of the great catastrophes that appear so often among us within marriage, he takes care to excite in advance the pity of the reader by showing him beings who are badly matched or forced together. Although for a long time*

In a country where the woman always freely exercises her choice, and where education has made her able to choose well, public opinion is unrelenting about her faults.

The rigor of the Americans arises in part from that. They consider marriage as an often onerous contract, but one by which you are nonetheless bound strictly to execute all the clauses, because you were able to know them in advance and you enjoyed complete liberty not to commit yourself to anything.[d]

What makes fidelity more obligatory makes it easier.

In aristocratic countries the purpose of marriage is to join property rather than persons; consequently it sometimes happens that the husband is chosen while in school and the wife while in the care of a wet-nurse. It is not surprising that the conjugal bond that holds the fortunes of the two married individuals together allows their hearts to wander at random. That flows naturally from the spirit of the contract.

When, on the contrary, each person always chooses his own companion, without anything external hindering or even guiding him, it is usually only

our morals have been softened by a great tolerance, it would be difficult to succeed in interesting us in the misfortunes of these characters if the author did not begin by excusing their failing. This artifice does not fail to succeed. The daily spectacle that we witness prepares us from afar to be indulgent.

American writers cannot make such excuses credible in the eyes of their readers; their customs, their laws refuse to do so and, having no hope of making disorderliness amiable, they do not portray it. It is, in part, to this cause that the small number of novels published in the United States must be attributed.

d. Fragment at the end of the chapter:

To put in the place where I examine in general if democracy leads to disorderliness. Somewhere near page 3./

It sometimes happens that in democracies men seem more corrupt than among aristocratic nations, but here you must be very careful not to be fooled by an appearance.

Equality of conditions does not make men immoral, but when men are immoral at the same time that they are equal, the effects of immorality are shown more easily on the outside.

For, among democratic peoples, since citizens have almost no action on each other, no one takes charge of maintaining order in the society or of keeping human passions in a certain external order.

Thus equality of conditions does not create the corruption of morals, but sometimes it exposes it.

similarity of tastes and ideas that draw the man and the woman closer; and this same similarity holds and settles them next to one another.

Our fathers had conceived a singular opinion in regard to marriage.

As they had noticed that the small number of marriages by inclination that took place in their time had almost always had a disastrous outcome, they had concluded resolutely that in such matters it was very dangerous to consult your own heart. Chance seemed more clear-sighted than choice.

It was not very difficult to see, however, that the examples they had before their eyes proved nothing.[e]

I will remark first that, if democratic peoples grant to women the right to choose freely their husbands, they take care in advance to provide their minds with the enlightenment, and their wills with the strength, that can be necessary for such a choice; while the young women who, among aristocratic peoples, escape furtively from paternal authority in order to throw themselves into the arms of a man whom they have been given neither the time to know nor the capacity to judge, lack all of these guarantees. You cannot be surprised that they make bad use of their free will, the first time that they use it; or that they fall into such cruel errors when, not having received democratic education, they want to follow, in marrying, the customs of democracy.

But there is more.

When a man and a woman want to come together across the inequalities of the aristocratic social state, they have immense obstacles to overcome. After breaking or loosening the bonds of filial obedience, they have to escape, by a final effort, the rule of custom and the tyranny of opinion; and when finally they have reached the end of this hard undertaking, they find themselves like strangers in the middle of their natural friends and close relatives; the prejudice that they overcame separates them from these friends and relatives. This situation does not take long to drain their courage and to embitter their hearts.

So if it happens that spouses united in this way are at first unhappy, and

e. "There is no man so powerful that he is able to struggle successfully for long against the whole of the customs and the opinions of his contemporaries, and reason will never be right against everyone" (*Rubish,* 2).

then guilty, it must not be attributed to the fact that they freely chose each other, but rather to the fact that they live in a society that does not accept such choices.

You must not forget, moreover, that the same effort that makes a man depart violently from a common delusion almost always carries him beyond reason; that, to dare to declare a war, even a legitimate one, against the ideas of your century and your country, the spirit must have a certain fierce and adventurous disposition, and that men of this character, whatever direction they take, rarely attain happiness and virtue. And, to say so in passing, this is what explains why, in the most necessary and most holy of revolutions, so few moderate and honest revolutionaries are found.

That, in an aristocratic century, a man dares by chance to consult, concerning the conjugal union, no other preferences than his particular opinion and his taste, and that disorderliness of morals and misery do not subsequently take long to enter his household, must not therefore be surprising. But, when this same way of acting is the natural and usual order of things, when the social state facilitates it, when paternal power goes along with it and when public opinion advocates it, you must not doubt that the internal peace of families becomes greater and that conjugal faith is better kept.

Nearly all the men of democracies follow a political career or exercise a profession, and on the other hand, the mediocrity of fortunes obliges the woman there to enclose herself every day within the interior of her house, in order to preside herself, and very closely, over the details of domestic administration.

All these distinct and forced labors are like so many natural barriers that, separating the sexes, make the solicitations of the one rarer and less intense, and the resistance of the other easier.

It is not that equality of conditions can ever succeed in making men chaste; but it gives to the disorderliness of their morals a less dangerous character. Since no one then has any longer either the leisure or the occasion to attack the virtues that want to defend themselves, you see at the very same time a great number of courtesans and a multitude of honest women.[f]

f. If that gets to the point that women give themselves to the first one who comes

Such a state of things produces deplorable individual miseries, but it does not prevent the social body from being in good form and strong; it does not destroy the bonds of family and does not enervate national mores. What puts society in danger is not great corruption among a few, it is the laxity of all. In the eyes of the legislator, prostitution is less to fear than love affairs.

This tumultuous and constantly fretful life, which equality gives to men, not only diverts them from love by removing the leisure to devote themselves to it; it also turns them away by a more secret, but more certain road.

All the men who live in democratic times contract more or less the intellectual habits of the industrial and commercial classes; their minds take a serious, calculating and positive turn; they willingly turn away from the ideal in order to aim for some visible and immediate goal that presents itself as the natural and necessary object of desires. Equality does not in this way destroy imagination; but it limits it and allows it to fly only by skimming over the earth.g

No one is less of a dreamer than the citizens of a democracy, and you hardly see any who want to give themselves to these idle and solitary con-

along without defending themselves, a horrible corruption can result, but it can also happen that you do not attack women from whom you expect some resistance.

It then happens that there is a multitude of streetwalkers [v: courtesans] and honest women.

[In the margin: Men always have the time to make love, but not courtship./

Man always attacks no matter what you do. The important thing is that women defend themselves well] (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE WOMAN, *Rubish,* 2).

g. Love in democracies./

Sentiment rarer but when .-.-.-.- more disorderly, freer from all rules than in aristocracies.

The greatest love during the century of Louis XIV stopped before certain facts, certain rules of language, certain ideas that would not stop it today.

[In the margin: See the Romans, the conversations of that time./

A certain moderation of language reigns amid the disorder of the senses.]

I am speaking here only about the barrier that customs present to it and not about the barrier that virtue presents. The latter is found in all social forms. It weakens or widens only when the core of mores is altered (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE WOMAN, *Rubish,* 2).

templations that ordinarily precede and that produce the great agitations of the heart.

They put, it is true, a great value on gaining for themselves the kind of profound, regular and peaceful affection that makes the charm and the security of life; but they do not readily run after the violent and capricious emotions that disturb and shorten it.

I know that all that precedes is completely applicable only to America and cannot, for now, be extended in a general way to Europe.

During the half-century that laws and habits have with an unparalleled energy pushed several European peoples toward democracy, you do not see that among these nations the relations of man and woman have become more regular and more chaste. The opposite even allows itself to be seen in some places. Certain classes are better regulated; general morality seems more lax. I will not be afraid to note it, for I feel myself no better disposed to flatter my contemporaries than to speak ill of them.

This spectacle must be distressing, but not surprising.

The happy influence that a democratic social state can exercise on the regularity of habits is one of those facts that can only be seen in the long run. If equality of conditions is favorable to good morals, the social effort, which makes conditions equal, is very deadly to them.[h]

During the fifty years that France has been undergoing transformation, we have rarely had liberty, but always disorderliness. Amid this universal confusion of ideas and this general disturbance of opinions, among this incoherent mixture of the just and the unjust, of the true and the false, of the right and the fact, public virtue has become uncertain, and private morality unsteady.

But all revolutions, whatever their objective or their agents, have at first produced similar effects. Even those that ended by tightening the bond of morals began by loosening it.

h. "<I hardly doubt that the democratic movement of today has contributed to the loosening that we witness, but this seems to me due particularly to our democracy and not to democracy in general>" (*Rubish,* 2).

So the disorders that we often witness do not seem to be an enduring fact. Already strange signs herald it.

There is nothing more miserably corrupt than an aristocracy that keeps its wealth while losing its power, and that, reduced to vulgar enjoyments, still possesses immense leisure. The energetic passions and great thoughts that formerly had animated it then disappear, and you hardly find anything else except a multitude of small gnawing vices that attach themselves to the aristocracy like worms to a cadaver.[j]

No one disputes that the French aristocracy of the last century was very dissolute; while ancient habits and old beliefs still maintained respect for morals in the other classes.

Nor will anyone have any difficulty coming to agreement that, in our time, a certain severity of principles shows itself among the debris of this same aristocracy, while disorderliness of morals has seemed to spread in the middle and inferior ranks of society. So that the same families that appeared, fifty years ago, the most lax, appear today the most exemplary, and that democracy seems to have made only the aristocratic classes moral.[k]

[There are men who see in this fact a cause for fears about the future.

I find in it a reason for hope.]

The Revolution, by dividing the fortunes of the nobles, by forcing them

j. "Take away their power and they tear down all the rest themselves. In their obscene rest, they no longer cultivate even the intellectual tastes that embellished the glorious leisure of their fathers. But most plunge into a gross well-being and console themselves with horses and dogs for not being able to govern the State" (YTC, CVc, p. 54).

"They will be like the Jews among the Christian nations of the Middle Ages [v: after the destruction of the temple], but different from the Jews on one point; they will not perpetuate themselves [v: like them they will await a Messiah who will not come]" (YTC, CVc, p. 60). This same note appears on the back of the jacket of the *rubish* SOCIABILITY OF THE AMERICANS. See note c of pp. 1263–64.

k. "Corc[elle (ed.)]. advises me (12 August 1837) to explain my thought when I say that the loosening of morals is greater today than fifty years ago, and to make some distinctions .-.-.-.- which such a judgment does not seem .-.-.- correct.

"His advice seems to me very difficult to follow in the text, whose rapidity does not allow me to stop, but it can be done in a note at the bottom of the page" (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE WOMAN, *Rubish,* 2). The Corcelles stayed at the Tocqueville château from the end of July to mid-August 1837 (see *Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 1, p. 81).

to occupy themselves assiduously with their affairs and with their families, by enclosing them with their children under the same roof, finally by giving a more reasonable and more serious turn to their thoughts, suggested to them, without their noticing it themselves, respect for religious beliefs, love of order, of peaceful pleasures, of domestic joys and of well-being; while the rest of the nation, which naturally had these same tastes, was carried toward [added: moral] disorderliness by the very effort that had to be made in order to overturn the laws and political customs.

The old French aristocracy suffered the consequences of the Revolution, and it did not feel the revolutionary passions, or share the often anarchic impulse that it produced; it is easy to imagine that it experiences in its morals the salutary influence of this revolution even before those who brought it about.

So it is permissible to say, although at first view it seems surprising, that, today, it is the most anti-democratic classes of the nation who best show the type of morality that it is reasonable to expect from democracy.

I cannot prevent myself from believing that, when we will have gained all the effects of the democratic revolution, after emerging from the tumult that arose from it, what is true today only of a few will little by little become true of all.

CHAPTER 12[a]

How the Americans Understand the Equality of Man and of Woman[b]

I showed how democracy destroyed or modified the various inequalities given birth by society; but is that all, and does democracy not succeed finally

a. "1. The man and the woman mingle less in America than anywhere else.
"2. Marital authority is strongly respected.
"3. The Americans have, however, tried much harder than we have done in Europe to raise the woman to the level of the man, but it is in the intellectual and moral world" (YTC, CVf, p. 44).

b. In notebook CVk, 2 (pp. 14–25), a copy of the chapter contains this initial note: "Chapter such as I revised it, but without being able to be satisfied about it in this form any more than the other. The fact is that I no longer understand anything; my mind is exhausted. (October 1839).
"Have the two versions copied and submit them to my friends" (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 14).
On the jacket of the manuscript, in pencil:

It must be condensed more. Remark of *Ampère* and *Édouard.*/
The same thing is noted in England. Comes from the Germanic and Protestant notion, but stronger in America because of the democratic layer. Good to say according to Ampère./
The above ideas are original only from the perspective that they are due to aristocracy or to democracy. As for portraits, they are drawn in other authors, principally Madame de Staël./
Make more clearly felt and seen the systems called *emancipation* of the woman. Do not assume that the reader knows them. This will add something piquant much [*sic*] to the chapter. Cite even, either in a note or in the text, the extravagant ideas of the Saint-Simonians and others on this point.

Tocqueville finished this chapter at the end of August 1837. The Beaumonts, who passed several days with the Tocquevilles in Normandy, approved this chapter that Tocqueville read to them.

in acting on this great inequality of man and woman, which has seemed, until today, to have its eternal foundation in nature?

I think that the social movement that brings closer to the same level the son and the father, the servant and the master, and in general, the inferior and the superior, elevates the woman and must more and more make her the equal of the man.

But here, more than ever, I feel the need to be well understood; for there is no subject on which the coarse and disorderly imagination of our century has been given a freer rein.

There are men in Europe who, confusing the different attributes of the sexes, claim to make the man and the woman beings, not only equal, but similar.[c] They give to the one as to the other the same functions, impose the same duties on them, and grant them the same rights; they mix them in everything, work, pleasures, public affairs. It can easily be imagined that by trying hard in this way to make one sex equal to the other, both are degraded; and that from this crude mixture of the works of nature only weak men and dishonest women can ever emerge.

This is not how the Americans understood the type of democratic equality that can be established between the woman and the man.[d] They thought that, since nature had established such a great variation between the physical and moral constitution of the man and that of the woman, its clearly indicated goal was to give a different use to their different faculties; and they judged that progress did not consist of making almost the same things out of dissimilar beings, but of having each of them fulfill his task to the best possible degree. The Americans applied to the two sexes the great principle of political economy that dominates industry today. They carefully divided the functions of the man and the woman, in order that the great work of society was better accomplished.

c. In the margin: "<In Europe women do not try to become perfect in their line, but to encroach upon ours.>"

d. Variation in the manuscript: ". . . and man. <In America no one has ever imagined joining the sexes in the same careers or making them contribute in the same way to social well-being, and no one that I know has yet found that the final consequence of democratic institutions and principles was to make the woman independent of the man and to transform her into jurist, judge or warrior.>"

America is the country in the world where the most constant care has been taken to draw clearly separated lines of action for the two sexes, and where the desire has been that both marched with an equal step, but always along different paths. You do not see American women lead matters outside of the family, conduct business, or finally enter into the political sphere; but you also do not find any who are forced to give themselves to the hard work of plowing or to any one of the difficult exercises that require the development of physical strength. There are no families so poor that they make an exception to this rule.[e]

If the American woman cannot escape the peaceful circle of domestic occupations, she is, on the other hand, never forced to leave it. [<She has been enclosed in her home, but there she rules.>]

The result is that American women, who often show a male reason and an entirely manly energy, conserve in general a very delicate appearance, and always remain women by manners, although they reveal themselves as men sometimes by mind and heart.

Nor have the Americans ever imagined that the consequence of democratic principles was to overturn marital authority and to introduce confusion of authority into the family.[f] They thought that every association, to be effective, must have a head, and that the natural head of the conjugal association was the man. So they do not deny to the latter the right to direct his companion; and they believe that, in the small society of husband and wife, as in the great political society, the goal of democracy is to regulate necessary powers and to make them legitimate, and not to destroy all power. [The Americans have, however, drawn the man and the woman closer than any other people, but it is only in the moral order.]

This opinion is not particular to one sex and contested by the other.

I did not notice that American women considered conjugal authority as

e. "≠All that is equally true of England, although to a lesser degree. This separation of man and woman exists in several countries of Europe and above all in England, but no where is it as well-marked≠" (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 16). See note j of p. 1066.

f. "Stand up somewhere against divorce and say what I heard repeated in the United States, that it gave rise to more evils than it cured" (*Rubish,* 2).

a happy usurpation of their rights, or that they believed that it was degrading to submit to it. I seemed to see, on the contrary, that they took a kind of glory in the voluntary surrender of their will, and that they located their grandeur in bending to the yoke themselves and not in escaping it. That, at least, was the sentiment expressed by the most virtuous; the others kept silent, and you do not hear in the United States the adulterous wife noisily claim the rights of woman, while trampling her most holy duties under foot.

It has often been remarked that in Europe a certain disdain is found even amid the flatteries that men lavish on women; although the European man often makes himself the slave of the woman, you see that he never sincerely believes her his equal.[g]

In the United States, women are scarcely praised; but it is seen every day that they are respected.

American men constantly exhibit a full confidence in the reason of their companion, and a profound respect for her liberty. They judge that her mind is as capable as that of man of discovering the naked truth, and her heart firm enough to follow the truth; and they have never sought to shelter the virtue of one more than that of the other from prejudices, ignorance or fear.[h]

It seems that in Europe, where you submit so easily to the despotic rule of women, you nonetheless refuse them some of the greatest attributes of the human species [added: while obeying them], and that you consider them as seductive [v: inferior] and incomplete beings; and, what you cannot find too astonishing, women themselves finish by seeing themselves in the same light, and they are not far from considering as a privilege the ability that is left to them to appear frivolous, weak and fearful. American women do not demand such rights.

g. In the margin: "This is shown—Education."

h. "Although the Americans do not make their daughter fight in the gymnasium as was formerly practiced in Sparta, you can no less say that they gave them a male education, since they teach them to use in a manly way reason, which is *the greatest attribute of man.* The exercises of Greece only tended to make the woman as strong as the man. They do not try to fortify their body, but to make their soul firm" (RUBISH OF THE CHAPTERS ON THE WOMAN, *Rubish,* 2).

You would say, on the other hand, that as regards morals, we have granted to the man a kind of singular immunity; so that there is as it were one virtue for him, and another one for his companion; and that, according to public opinion, the same act may be alternatively a crime or only a failing.

The Americans do not know this iniquitous division of duties and rights. Among them, [purity of morals in marriage and respect for conjugal faith are imposed equally on the man and on the woman and] the seducer is as dishonored as his victim.

It is true that American men rarely show to women these attentive considerations with which we enjoy surrounding them in Europe; but they always show, by their conduct, that they assume them to be virtuous and delicate; and they have such a great respect for their moral liberty that in their presence each man carefully watches his words, for fear that the women may be forced to hear language that wounds them. In America, a young girl undertakes a long journey, alone and without fear.[j]

The legislators of the United States, who have made nearly all the provisions of the penal code milder, punish rape with death; and there is no crime that public opinion pursues with a more inexorable ardor. This can be explained: since the Americans imagine nothing more precious than the honor of the woman, or nothing so respectable as her independence, they consider that there is no punishment too severe for those who take them away from her against her will.

In France, where the same crime is struck by much milder penalties, it is often difficult to find a jury that convicts. Would it be scorn for modesty or scorn for the woman? I cannot prevent myself from believing that it is both.

Thus, the Americans do not believe that man and woman have the duty or the right to do the same things, but they show the same respect for the role of each one of them, and they consider them as beings whose value is equal, although their destinies differ. They do not give the courage of the woman the same form or the same use as that of the man; but they never

j. In the margin: "All this, says Ampère, is Germanic and not democratic. It is found in Germany and in England, as well as in America."

doubt her courage; and if they consider that the man and his companion should not always use their intelligence and their reason in the same way, they judge, as least, that the reason of the one is as certain as that of the other, and her intelligence as clear.[k]

So the Americans, who have allowed the [<natural>] inferiority of the woman to continue to exist in society, have with all their power elevated her, in the intellectual and moral world, to the level of the man; and in this they seem to me to have understood admirably the true notion of democratic progress. [They have not imagined for the woman a greatness similar to that of the man, but they have imagined her as great as the man, and they have made her their equal even when they have kept the necessary right to command her.]

As for me, I will not hesitate to say it: although in the United States the woman hardly leaves the domestic circle, and although she is, in certain respects, very dependent, nowhere has her position seemed higher to me; and if, now that I am approaching the end of this book, in which I have shown so many considerable things done by the Americans, you asked me to what I think the singular prosperity and growing strength of this people must be principally attributed, I would answer that it is to the superiority of their women.[m]

k. "Piece of Pascal on the greatness of the different orders, p. 93 [98? (ed.)]" (With the notes of the chapter on mores, *Rubish,* 2). The edition used by Tocqueville has not been identified.

m. "≠Say clearly somewhere that the women seem to me very superior to the men in America≠" (*Rubish,* 2).

CHAPTER 13[a]

How Equality Divides the Americans Naturally into a Multitude of Small Particular Societies[b]

You would be led to believe that the ultimate consequence and necessary effect of democratic institutions is to mix citizens in private life as well as in public life, and to force them all to lead a common existence [<to mingle them constantly in the same pleasures and in the same affairs.

Some of the legislators of antiquity had tried it and the Convention attempted it in our times.>]

That is to understand in a very crude and very tyrannical way the equality that arises from democracy.

There is no social state or laws that can make men so similar that education, fortune and tastes do not put some difference between them, and if different men can sometimes find it in their interest to do the same things in common, you must believe that they will never find their pleasure in doing so. So they will always, whatever you do, slip out of the hand of the

a. In aristocratic countries, each class forms like a great natural friendship that obliges men to see and to meet each other.

When there are no longer any classes that inevitably hold a certain number of men together, there is nothing more than whim, instinct, taste that draws them together, which multiplies particular societies infinitely.

The Americans who mingle constantly with each other in order to deal with common affairs, set themselves carefully apart with a small number of friends in order to enjoy private life" (YTC, CVf, p. 45).

b. Variant of the title on the jacket of the manuscript: HOW DEMOCRACY [v: EQUALITY] AFTER DESTROYING THE GREAT BARRIERS THAT SEPARATED MEN, DIVIDES THEM INTO A MULTITUDE OF SMALL PARTICULAR SOCIETIES.

legislator; and escaping in some way from the circle in which you try to enclose them, they will establish, alongside the great political society, small private societies, whose bond will be the similarity of conditions, habits and mores.

In the United States, citizens do not have any preeminence over each other; they owe each other reciprocally neither obedience nor respect; they administer justice together and govern the State, and in general they all join together to deal with the matters that influence the common destiny; but I never heard it said that anyone claimed to lead them all to amuse themselves in the same way or to enjoy themselves mixed haphazardly together in the same places.

The Americans, who mingle so easily within political assemblies and courtrooms, on the contrary, separate themselves with great care into small very distinct associations, in order to enjoy the pleasures of private life all by themselves. Each one of them readily recognizes all of his fellow citizens as his equals, but he receives only a very small number among his friends and guests.

That seems very natural to me. As the circle of public society expands, it must be expected that the sphere of private relations will narrow; instead of imagining that the citizens of new societies are going to end up living in common, I am afraid indeed that they will finally end up by forming nothing more than very small cliques.

Among aristocratic peoples, the different classes are like vast enclosures which you cannot leave and which you cannot enter. The classes do not communicate with each other; but within the interior of each one of them, men inevitably talk to each other every day. Even when they do not naturally suit each other, the general affinity of the same condition draws them closer.[c]

c. When men classed within an aristocracy are all part of a hierarchy, each one, at whatever place in the social chain where he is located, finds above and below him one of his fellows with whom he is in daily contact. He judges that his interest as well as his duty is to serve these two men in all encounters. But he remains a stranger and almost an enemy to all the others.

They finish by believing that all men are not part of the same humanity.

It is not a complete insensitivity, it is a (illegible word) sensitivity (YTC, CVa, pp. 6–7).

But, when neither law nor custom takes charge of establishing frequent and habitual relations between certain men, the accidental similarity of opinions and propensities decides it; which varies particular societies infinitely.

In democracies, where citizens never differ much from one another and are naturally so close that at each instant they can all blend into a common mass, a multitude of artificial and arbitrary classifications is created by the aid of which each man tries to set himself apart, for fear of being dragged despite himself into the crowd.

It can never fail to be so; for you can change human institutions, but not man. Whatever the general effort of a society to make citizens equal and similar, the particular pride of individuals will always try to escape from the level, and will want to form somewhere an inequality from which he profits.

In aristocracies, men are separated from each other by high immobile barriers; in democracies, they are divided by a multitude of small, nearly invisible threads, which break at every moment and change place constantly.

Thus, whatever the progress of equality, a large number of small private associations among democratic peoples will always be formed amid the great political society. But none of them will resemble, in manners, the upper class that directs aristocracies.

CHAPTER 14[a]

Some Reflections on American Manners[b]

There is nothing, at first view, that seems less important than the external form of human actions, and there is nothing to which men attach more

a. Manners come from the very heart of mores and sometimes result as well from an arbitrary convention between certain men.

Men of democratic countries do not naturally have grand manners because their life is limited.

Moreover, they do not have studied manners because they cannot agree on the establishment of the rule of savoir-faire. So there is always incoherence in their manners, above all as long as the democratic revolution lasts.

That aristocratic manners disappear forever with aristocracy, that not even the taste or the idea of them is preserved.

You must not be too distressed about it, but it is permitted to regret it (YTC, CVf, p. 45).

The manuscript of this chapter contains another version of the beginning, contained in a jacket that explains: "Piece that began the chapter which I removed because it seemed to me to get back into often reproduced deductions of ideas, but which I must have copied and read." This fragment, with the exception of the description of aristocratic society (reproduced in note f) is not very different from the published version.

Tocqueville began the writing of this chapter at the beginning of the month of September 1837. "Here I am at *manners,* a very difficult subject for everyone, but particularly for me, who finds himself ill at ease in the small details of private life. Consequently I will be brief. I hope in about a week to have finished and to be able to get into the great chapters that end the book" (*Correspondance avec Corcelle, OC,* XV, 1, p. 86).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript: "Courtesy, civility. Neglected words that must be used by going over it again."

On the jacket of the *rubish:* "To reexamine with more care than the other *rubish.* A fairly large number of ideas that I was not able to express at first are found here in germ or in development.

"Courtesy, civility, civil: words that I have neglected" (*Rubish,* 2).

In another place: "I do not think that it is unworthy of the gravity of my subject to

value; they become accustomed to everything, except living in a society that does not have their manners. So the influence that the social and political state exercises on manners is worth the trouble to be examined seriously.[c]

examine the influence that democracy can exercise on manners. Form influences more than you think the substance of human actions" (*Rubish,* 2).

c. If after having considered the relationships that exist between the superior and the inferior, I examine the relations of equals among themselves, I discover facts analogous to those that I pointed out above.

There are a thousand means indeed to judge the social state and political laws of a people once you have well understood what the various consequences are that flow naturally from these two different things. The most trivial observations of a traveler can lead you to truth on this point as well as the searching remarks of philosophers. Everything goes together in the constitution of moral man as well as in his physical nature, and just as Cuvier, by seeing a single organ, was able to reconstruct the whole body of the entire animal, someone who would know one of the opinions or habits of a people would often be able, I think, to conceive a fairly complete picture of the people itself.

If an ignorant (illegible word) of the Antipodes told me that, in the country that he has just traveled across, certain rules of politeness are observed as immutable laws and that the least actions of men there are subjected to a sort of ceremonial from which no one can ever depart, I will not be afraid to assert that I already know enough about it to assert that the inhabitants of the country that he is speaking to me about are divided among themselves in a profound and permanent way by different and unequal conditions.

When the human mind is delivered from the shackles that inequality of conditions imposed on it, it does not fail to attach a certain cachet of individual originality to its least as to its principal conceptions.

I accept without difficulty that men change their laws [v: constitution] more readily than the customs of etiquette and that they modify the general principles of their morals more easily than the external form of their words. I know that innovations usually begin with the important classes of things before arriving at the least important. But finally they arrive there, and after overturning the dominion of the rule in politics, in sciences, in philosophy, the human mind escapes from it in the small actions of every day.

It is impossible to live for a time in the United States without discovering that a sort of chance seems to preside in social relationships. Politeness is subjected to laws less fixed, less detailed, more arbitrary, less complicated than in Europe. It is in some way improvised each day (illegible word), each man following the utility of the moment. More value is attached there to the intention of pleasing than to the means that are used to do so. Custom, tone, example influence the actions of men, but they do not link their conduct to them in as absolute a manner as in the civilized portions of the Old World.

It would be good to insert here a small portrait in the manner of *Lettres persanes* or of *Les Caractères* of La Bruyère. But I lack the facts. [They (ed.)] must be taken from France.

You notice something analogous among us in Europe.

Manners generally come from the very heart of mores; and sometimes they result as well from an arbitrary convention between certain men. They are at the same time natural and acquired.

When men see that they are first without question and without difficulty; when every day they have before their eyes the great matters that occupy them, leaving the details to others, and when they live with a wealth that they did not acquire and they are not afraid of losing, you easily imagine that they feel a sort of superb disdain for the petty interests and material

[In the margin: Perhaps the notes of Beaumont will provide [some (ed.)].]

Among the nations of Europe where a great inequality of conditions still reigns, most of the small daily relationships of men with each other continue to be subjected to fixed and traditional rules that give society, despite the changes that are taking place within it, an unchanging aspect. On the contrary, among peoples whose social state is already very democratic, the exceptions to this rule become so numerous every day that it is difficult to say if the rule exists or where it is found.

So if you see each man dress himself more or less as he pleases, speak or keep quiet as he desires, accept or reject generally received formulations, subject himself to the rule of fashion or escape from it with impunity, if each man escapes in some way from common *practice* and easily gets himself exempted, do not laugh; the moment has come to think and to act. These things are trivial, but the cause that produces them is serious. *You have before your eyes the slightest symptoms of a great illness.* Be sure that when each man believes himself entitled to decide alone the form of an item of clothing or the proprieties of language, he does not hesitate to judge all things by himself, and when the small social conventions are so badly observed, count on the fact that an important revolution has taken place in the great social conventions.

So these indications alone should be enough for you to understand that a great revolution has already taken place in human societies, that it is good from now on to think about tightening the social bond which on all sides is trying to become looser, and that, no longer able to force all men to do the same things, a means must be found to lead them to want to do so (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 33–37).

You find this note in the *rubish:*

> There is in the bundle entitled: *Detached piece on the philosophical method of the Americans* . . . ideas and sentences that I should make use of when I review the chapters relative to the relationships of the son with the children [*sic*], of the servant with the master . . ./
>
> *Idem* when I arrive at the customs of society. *In fine* good piece./
>
> *Idem* at the chapter on revolutions. Note at the head of the piece entitled new sources of beliefs./
>
> 26 November 1838 (*Rubish,* 2).

cares of life, and that they have a natural grandeur in thought that words and manners reveal.

In democratic countries, manners usually have little grandeur, because private life in them is very limited. Manners are often common, because thought has only a few opportunities to rise above the preoccupation with domestic interests.[d]

True dignity of manners consists of always appearing in your place, neither higher, nor lower;[e] that is within reach of the peasant as of the prince. In democracies all places seem doubtful; as a result, it happens that manners, which are often arrogant there, are rarely dignified. Moreover, they are never either very well-ordered or very studied.[f]

d. To put with manners./
August 1837.
How under democracy citizens, although perfectly equal civilly and politically, having daily relationships and no ideas of preeminence over each other, divide themselves however into distinct societies for the charm and usefulness of life, according to their education and their fortune.
That the continual jumble and meeting in the same places for the same enjoyments of dissimilar men is a crude notion of equality (*Rubish,* 2).

e. "I believe that good taste like beauty has its foundation in nature itself. It is or is not, apart from the will of men; but the natural rules in the matter of good taste can only be collected and put in order by a select society, enlightened enough and small enough in number always to hold onto the rules that it acknowledged at one time as the best. So there is something conventional in matters of taste, whereas there is hardly any convention possible under democracies" (*Rubish,* 2).

f. So an aristocratic class not only has grand manners, but it also has well-ordered and studied manners. Although the form of human actions originally emerged there, as elsewhere, from the substance of sentiments and ideas, it ended over time by being independent of sentiments and ideas; and custom there finally became an invisible and blind force that constrains different beings to act in an analogous manner and gives all of them a common appearance.
Among the multitude of all the small particular societies into which the great democratic body is divided, there is not a single one that presents a similar tableau.
There are rich men in a democracy, but there is no rich class. You find powerful men there, but not powerful families, or those that have habitually, over several generations, hereditarily had before their eyes the great spectacle of grandeur; if by chance there are a few of this kind, they are not naturally or solidly attached to each other and do not form a separate body within the general society. So they cannot

Men who live in democracies are too mobile for a certain number of them to succeed in establishing a code of savoir-faire and to be able to make sure that it is followed. So each man there acts more or less as he likes, and a certain incoherence in manners always reigns, because manners conform to the individual sentiments and ideas of each man, rather than to an ideal model given in advance for the imitation of all.

Nonetheless, this is much more apparent at the moment when aristocracy has just fallen than when it has been destroyed for a long time.

The new political institutions and the new mores then gather in the same places men still made prodigiously dissimilar by education and habits and often force them to live together; this makes great colorful mixtures emerge at every moment. You still remember that a precise code of politeness existed; but you no longer know either what it contains or where it is to be found. Men have lost the common law of manners, and they have not yet decided to do without it; but each one tries hard to form a certain arbitrary and changing rule out of the debris of former customs; so that manners have neither the regularity nor the grandeur that they often exhibit among aristocratic peoples, nor the simple and free turn that you sometimes notice in democracy; they are at the very same time constrained and unconstrained.

That is not the normal state.

When equality is complete and old, all men, having more or less the same ideas and doing more or less the same things, have no need to agree or to copy each other in order to act and to speak in the same way; you constantly see a multitude of small dissimilarities in their manners; you do not notice any great differences. They never resemble each other perfectly, because they do not have the same model; they are never very dissimilar,

regulate in a detailed and invariable way the external actions of their members. If they had the will to do so, time is lacking. For each day they are themselves swept along, in spite of their efforts, in the democratic movement that sweeps everything along.

Fragment contained in the jacket of the manuscript to which note a for p. 1262 makes reference.

because they share the same condition. At first view, you would say that the manners of all Americans are exactly the same. It is only when considering them very closely that you notice the particularities by which they all differ.[g]

The English have made much fun of American manners; and what is peculiar is that most of those who have given us such an amusing portrait belonged to the middle classes of England, to whom this same portrait very much applies. So that these merciless detractors usually offer the example of what they are blaming in the United States; they do not notice that they are scoffing at themselves, to the great delight of the aristocracy of their country.[h]

Nothing harms democracy more than the external form of its mores. Many men would readily become accustomed to its vices, who cannot bear its manners.

I cannot, however, accept that there is nothing to praise in the manners of democratic peoples.

Among aristocratic nations, all those who are near the first class usually try hard to resemble it, which produces very ridiculous and very insipid imitations. If democratic peoples do not possess the model of grand manners, they at least escape from the obligation of seeing bad copies every day.

In democracies, manners are never as refined as among aristocratic peoples; but they also never appear as crude. You hear neither the gross words of the populace, nor the noble and select expressions of the great lords. There is often triviality in the mores, but not brutality or baseness.

[If it is true that the men who live among these peoples scarcely ever offer to render small services, they readily oblige you in your needs; manners are less polite than in aristocracies and more benevolent.]

I said that in democracies a precise code regarding savoir-faire cannot evolve. This has its disadvantage and its advantages. In aristocracies, the

g. "You can say however that customs, mores are more well-ordered in the United States than in France. That results from Puritan opinions that *order* life and from commercial habits that *direct* it" (*Rubish,* 2).

h. Perhaps Tocqueville is alluding to Basil Hall.

rules of propriety impose on each man the same appearance; they make all the members of the same class similar, despite their particular propensities; they adorn the natural and hide it. Among democratic peoples, manners are neither as studied nor as well-ordered; but they are often more sincere. They form like a light and poorly woven veil, through which the true sentiments and individual ideas of each man are easily seen. So the form and the substance of human actions there often have an intimate rapport, and, if the great tableau of humanity is less ornate, it is more true. This is why, in a sense, you can say that the effect of democracy is not precisely to give men certain manners, but to prevent them from having manners.

You can sometimes find again in a democracy some of the sentiments, passions, virtues and vices of aristocracy, but not its manners. The latter are lost and disappear forever, when the democratic revolution is complete.[j]

It seems that there is nothing more durable than the manners of an aristocratic class; for it still preserves them for some time after having lost its property and its power; nor anything as fragile, for scarcely have they disappeared than any trace of them is no longer found, and it is difficult to say what they were from the moment that they are no more. A change in the social state works this wonder; a few generations are enough.

The principal features of aristocracy remain engraved in history when aristocracy is destroyed, but the light and delicate forms of its mores disappear from the memory of men, almost immediately after its fall. Men cannot imagine them once they are no longer before their eyes. They escape without men seeing or feeling it. For, in order to feel the type of refined pleasure obtained by the distinction and the choice of manners, habit and education must have prepared the heart, and the taste for manners is easily lost with the practice.

Thus, not only can democratic peoples not have the manners of aristocracy, but they do not conceive or desire them; they do not imagine them;

j. "In democracies *individuals* very distinguished in taste and manners can be found, but such a *society* [v: class] is never found" (*Rubish,* 2).

the manners of aristocracy are, for democratic peoples, as if they had never been.

[You would be wrong to believe that the model of aristocratic manners can at least be preserved among a few remnants of the old aristocracy. The members of a fallen aristocracy can indeed preserve the prejudices of their fathers, but not their manners.]

Too much importance must not be attached to this loss; but it is permitted to regret it.[k]

I know that more than once it has happened that the same men have had very distinguished mores and very vulgar sentiments; the interior of courts has shown enough that great appearance could often hide very base hearts. But, if the manners of aristocracy did not bring about virtue, they sometimes ornamented virtue itself. It was not an ordinary spectacle to see a numerous and powerful class, in which all of the external actions of life seemed, at every instant, to reveal natural nobility of sentiments and thoughts, refinement and consistency of tastes, and urbanity of mores.

k. ≠It is often by necessity as much as by taste that the rich [v: the upper classes] of democracies copy the people's ways of acting.≠ In the United States the most opulent citizens show haughty manners only in the intimacy of their home [v: are very careful not to flaunt their grandeur]. . . . They readily listen to them [the people (ed.)], and constantly speak to them.

The rich of democracies draw toward them the poor man and attach him to themselves by manners more than by benefits. The very greatness of the benefits, which brings to light the difference of conditions, causes a secret irritation in those who profit from them. But simplicity of manners has nearly irresistible charms. Their familiarity inveigles, and even their crudeness does not always displease. This truth penetrates only very slowly the mind of the rich.

[In the margin: They go out constantly to mingle with the people. They readily listen to them and speak to them every day in the countries of Europe that turn to democracy.]

They usually understand it only when it is too late to make use of it. They agree to do good to the men of the people, but they want to continue to hold them carefully at a distance. They believe that is enough, but they are wrong. They would ruin themselves in this way without warming the heart of the population that surrounds them. It is not the sacrifice of their money that is asked of them, it is that of their pride.

[In the margin: They resist it as long as the revolution lasts and they accept it only a long time after it has ended.]

26 September 1839 [1837? (ed.)] (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 6–7).

The manners of aristocracy gave beautiful illusions about human nature; and, although the tableau was often false, you experienced a noble pleasure in looking at it.[m]

m. *Democracy. Manners.*

In France the elegant simplicity of manners is hardly found except among men belonging to old families; the others show themselves either very affected or very vulgar in their way of acting. That comes, I think, from the state of revolution in which we are still. It is a time of crisis that must be borne. Amid the confusion that reigns in all things, *new* men do not know precisely what must be done in order to distinguish themselves from the crowd. Some believe that the best means to show yourself superior is to be rude and forward; others think that on the contrary you must be particular about even the least details for fear of betraying your common origin at some point. Both are anxious about the results of their efforts, and their agitation betrays itself constantly amid their simulated assurance. Men who, on the contrary, have had a long habit of being without question and by heredity the first are not anxious about these things. They have a natural ease, and they attain without thinking about it the goal toward which the others tend, most often without being able to attain it. A time will come, I hope, when there will be among us a fixed and settled model of what is suitable and in good taste, and each man will conform to it without difficulty. Then to all well-bred men will happen what happened formerly within the aristocracy, when there was a certain code of proprieties to which each man submitted without discussing it and so to speak without knowing it.

You see that my tendencies are always democratic. I am a partisan of democracy without having any illusion about its faults and without failing to recognize its dangers. I am even all the more so as I believe that I see both more clearly, because I am profoundly convinced that there is no way to prevent its triumph, and that it is only by marching with it and by directing its progress as much as possible that you can decrease the evils it brings and produce the good things that it promises (*Rubish,* 2). This fragment is written on the writing paper of Tocqueville.

CHAPTER 15[a]

Of the Gravity of Americans and Why It Does Not Prevent Them from Often Doing Thoughtless Things[b]

The men who live in democratic countries do not value those sorts of unsophisticated, turbulent and crude diversions to which the people devote themselves in aristocracies; they find them childish or insipid. They show scarcely more taste for the intellectual and refined amusements of the aristocratic classes; they must have something productive and substantial in their pleasures, and they want to mix material enjoyments with their joy.

In aristocratic societies, the people readily abandon themselves to the impulses of a tumultuous and noisy gaiety that abruptly tears them away from the contemplation of their miseries; the inhabitants of democracies do not like to feel drawn violently out of themselves in this way, and they always lose sight of themselves with regret. To these frivolous transports, they prefer the grave and silent relaxations that resemble business affairs and do not cause them to forget them entirely. [In this sense you can say that gambling is an entirely democratic pastime.]

There is an American who, instead of going during his moments of leisure to dance joyously in the public square, as the men of his profession

a. "The Americans are grave because they are constantly occupied by serious things, and they are thoughtless because they have only an instant of attention to give to each one of those things" (YTC, CVf, p. 46).

b. The *rubish* indicates that in the beginning the chapter was divided into three distinct chapters:

1. Gravity of the Americans.
2. Amusements in democracies.
3. Why democratic peoples despite their gravity act thoughtlessly (*Rubish,* 2).

continue to do in a great part of Europe, withdraws alone deep within his house to drink. This man enjoys two pleasures at once: he thinks about his trade, and he gets drunk decently at home.[c]

[≠I have visited peoples very ignorant, very miserable and completely strangers to their own affairs; to me, they appeared, in general, joyous. I have traveled across a country whose inhabitants, enlightened and rich, directed themselves in everything; I always found them grave and often sad [v: worried and taciturn].≠]

I believed that the English formed the most serious nation that existed on earth, but I saw the Americans, and I changed my opinion.[d]

[≠The inhabitant of the United States has an austere appearance, something anxious and preoccupied reigns in his look; his manner is constrained and you easily see that he never opens to external impressions anything except the smallest part of his soul. He is sometimes somber and always grave.≠]

I do not want to say that temperament does not count for much in the character of the inhabitants of the United States. I think, nonetheless, that the political institutions contribute to it still more.

I believe that the gravity of the Americans arises in part from their pride. In democratic countries, the poor man himself has a high idea of his personal value. He views himself with satisfaction and readily believes that others are looking at him. In this frame of mind, he carefully watches his words and his actions and does not let himself go, for fear of disclosing what he lacks. He imagines that, in order to appear dignified, he must remain grave.

But I notice another more intimate and more powerful cause that instinctively produces among the Americans this gravity that astonishes me.

Under despotism, peoples give themselves from time to time to outbursts of a wild joy; but, in general, they are cheerless and reserved, because they are afraid.

In absolute monarchies, which custom and mores temper, peoples often

c. Originally, the first chapter ended here.

d. "There is also something *Puritan* and *English* in this gravity of the Americans./ "Gravity that is often due to an absence of serenity in the soul" (*Rubish,* 2).

display an even-tempered and lively mood, because having some liberty and great enough security, they are excluded from the most important cares of life; but all free peoples are grave, because their minds are habitually absorbed by the sight of some dangerous or difficult project.

It is so above all among free peoples who are constituted as democracies. Then, in all classes, an infinite number of men is found who are constantly preoccupied by the serious matters of government, and those who do not think about directing the public fortune give themselves entirely to the concern of increasing their private fortune. Among such a people, gravity is no longer particular to certain men; it becomes a national habit.

You speak about the small democracies of antiquity, whose citizens came to the public square with crowns of roses, and who spent nearly all their time in dances and in spectacles. I do not believe in such republics any more than that of Plato; or, if things happened there as we are told, I am not afraid to assert that these so-called democracies were formed out of elements very different from ours, and that they had with the latter only the name in common.

[<As for me, I cannot prevent myself from believing that a people will be more serious as its institutions and its mores become more democratic.>]

It must not be believed, however, that amid all their labors, the men who live in democracies consider themselves to be pitied; the opposite is noticed. There are no men who value their conditions as much as those men do. They would find life without savor, if you delivered them from the cares that torment them, and they are more attached to their concerns than aristocratic peoples to their pleasures.

[Although the Americans are more serious than the English, you meet among them far fewer melancholy men.[e] Among a people where all citizens work, there are sometimes great anxieties, miseries and bitter distresses, but not melancholy.]

e. "No melancholy in America. Idea to treat separately afterward.
"[In the margin] Louis" (*Rubish,* 2).

I wonder why the same democratic peoples, who are so grave, sometimes behave in so thoughtless a way.[f]

The Americans, who almost always maintain a steady bearing and a cold manner, nonetheless allow themselves often to be carried very far beyond the limits of reason by a sudden passion or an unthinking opinion, and it happens that they seriously commit singular blunders.

This contrast should not be surprising.

[<Amid the tumult and the thousand discordant noises that are heard within a democracy, sometimes the voice of truth becomes lost.>]

There is a sort of ignorance that arises from extreme publicity. In despotic States, men do not know how to act, because they are told nothing; among democratic nations, they often act haphazardly, because the desire has been to tell them everything. The first do not know, and the others forget. The principal features of each tableau disappear for them among the multitude of details.

You are astonished by all the imprudent remarks that a public man sometimes allows himself in free States and above all in democratic States, without being compromised by them; while, in absolute monarchies, a few words that escape by chance are enough to expose him forever and ruin him without resources.

That is explained by what precedes. When you speak in the middle of a great crowd, many words are not heard, or are immediately erased from the memory of those who hear; but in the silence of a mute and immobile multitude, the slightest whispers strike the ear.

In democracies, men are never settled; a thousand chance occurrences make them constantly change place, and almost always something unexpected and, so to speak, improvised reigns in their life. Consequently they are often forced to do what they learned badly, to speak about what they scarcely understand, and to give themselves to work for which a long apprenticeship has not prepared them.

In aristocracies, each man has only a single goal that he pursues constantly. But among democratic peoples, the existence of man is more com-

f. The third chapter began with this paragraph.

plicated; it is rare that the same mind there does not embrace several things at once, and often things very foreign to each other. Since he cannot understand all of them well, he easily becomes satisfied with imperfect notions.

When the inhabitant of democracies is not pressed by his needs, he is at least by his desires; for among all the goods that surround him, he sees none that is entirely out of his reach. So he does everything with haste, contents himself with approximations, and never stops except for a moment to consider each of his actions.

His curiosity is at once insatiable and satisfied at little cost, for he values knowing a lot quickly, rather than knowing anything well.

He hardly has time, and he soon loses the taste to go deeper.

Thus, democratic peoples are grave, because their social and political state leads them constantly to concern themselves with serious things; and they act thoughtlessly, because they give only a little time and attention to each one of these things.

The habit of inattention must be considered as the greatest vice of the democratic mind.

CHAPTER 16[a]

Why the National Vanity of the Americans Is More Anxious and More Quarrelsome Than That of the English[b]

All free peoples take pride in themselves, but national pride does not appear among all in the same manner.

The Americans, in their relationships with foreigners, seem impatient with the least censure and insatiable for praise. The slightest praise pleases them, and the greatest rarely is enough to satisfy them; they badger you every moment to get you to praise them; and, if you resist their insistent demands, they praise themselves. You would say that, doubting their own merit, they want to have its picture before their eyes at every instant. Their vanity is not only greedy, it is anxious and envious. It grants nothing while constantly asking. It seeks compliments and is quarrelsome at the same time.

a. The national vanity of the English is measured and haughty, it neither grants or asks anything.

[In the margin: Chapter perhaps to delete.]

That of the Americans seeks compliments, is quarrelsome and anxious.

On this point, English mores have taken the turn of ideas of the aristocracy which, possessing incalculable and inalienable advantages, enjoys them with insouciance and with pride.

The Americans have equally transferred the habits of their private vanity to their national vanity (YTC, CVf, p. 46).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript: "I do not know if this chapter should be kept. The eternal comparison is found there. Moreover, I have said analogous things elsewhere, particularly in the first work, relating to the vanity that democratic institutions give to the Americans. *America is a country of liberty,* vol. II, pp. 115 and 116." Tocqueville is alluding to the part devoted to public spirit in the United States, pp. 116–21 of the 1835 edition (pp. 384–89 of the second volume of this edition).

I say to an American that the country that he inhabits is beautiful; he replies: "It is true, there is no country like it in the world!" I admire the liberty enjoyed by the inhabitants and he answers me: "What a precious gift liberty is! But there are very few peoples who are worthy to enjoy it." I remark on the purity of morals that reigns in the United States: "I imagine," he says, "that a foreigner, who has been struck by the corruption that is seen in all the other nations, is astonished by this spectacle." I finally abandon him to self-contemplation; but he returns to me and does not leave until he has succeeded in making me repeat what I have just said to him. You cannot imagine a patriotism[c] more troublesome and more talkative. It tires even those who honor it.[d]

It is not like this with the English. The Englishman calmly enjoys the real or imaginary advantages that in his eyes his country possesses. If he grants nothing to other nations, he also asks nothing for his own. The disapproval of foreigners does not upset him and their praise hardly gratifies him. He maintains vis-à-vis the entire world a reserve full of disdain and ignorance. His pride does not need to be fed; it lives on itself.[e]

That two peoples, who not long ago sprang from the same stock, appear so opposite to each other in the manner of feeling and speaking, is remarkable.

In aristocratic countries, the great possess immense privileges, on which their pride rests, without trying to feed on the slight advantages that are

c. "Patriotism, reasoned egoism" (YTC, CVa, p. 4).

d. I recall that one day in New York, I found myself in the company of a young American woman, daughter of a man whose discoveries in the art of navigation will be famous forever. I had noticed her [v: M. F. was no less remarkable] because of her extreme flirtatiousness as much as for her stunning beauty. Now, I happened one day to allow myself to say to her while laughing that she was worthy to be a French woman. Immediately her gaze became severe; the engaging smile that was usually on her lips suddenly vanished. Full of indignation, she gave me the most ridiculous and the most amusing look of a prude {that I had ever seen in my life} and wrapped herself in an impassive dignity. Do not think that what offended her so much was to be flirtatious; she would have readily accepted condemnation on this point; it was to be not completely American (*Rubish,* 2). It probably concerned Julia Fulton (see George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* p. 142).

e. To the side: "<It is the aristocracy that on this point has given the turn to the ideas and habits of the English nation.>"

related. Since these privileges came to them by inheritance, they consider them, in a way, as a part of themselves, or at least as a natural right, inherent in their person. So they have a calm sentiment of their superiority; they do not think about praising prerogatives that everyone notices and that no one denies to them. They are not surprised enough by them to speak about them. They remain immobile in their solitary grandeur, sure that everyone sees them without their trying to show themselves, and sure that no one will undertake to take their grandeur away from them.

When an aristocracy leads public affairs, its national pride naturally takes this reserved, unconcerned and haughty form, and all the other classes of the nation imitate it.

When on the contrary conditions differ little, the least advantages have importance. Since each man sees around him a million men who possess all the same or analogous advantages, pride becomes demanding and jealous; it becomes attached to miserable nothings and defends them stubbornly.

In democracies, since conditions are very mobile, men almost always have recently acquired the advantages they possess; this makes them feel an infinite pleasure in putting them on view, in order to show to others and to attest to themselves that they enjoy those advantages; and since, at every instant, these advantages can happen to escape them, they are constantly alarmed and work hard to demonstrate that they still have them. Men who live in democracies love their country in the same way that they love themselves, and they transfer the habits of their private vanity to their national vanity.

The anxious and insatiable vanity of democratic peoples is due so much to the equality and to the fragility of conditions, that the members of the proudest nobility show absolutely the same passion in the small parts of their existence where there is something unstable or disputed.

An aristocratic class always differs profoundly from the other classes of the nation by the extent and the perpetuity of its prerogatives; but sometimes it happens that several of its members differ from each other only by small fleeting advantages that they can lose and gain every day.

We have seen the members of a powerful aristocracy, gathered in a capital or in a court, argue fiercely over the frivolous privileges that depend on the

caprice of fashion or on the will of the master. They then showed toward one another precisely the same puerile jealousies that animate the men of democracies, the same ardor to grab the least advantages that their equals disputed with them, and the same need to put on view to all the advantages that they enjoyed.

If courtiers ever dared to have national pride, I do not doubt that they would show a pride entirely similar to that of democratic peoples.

CHAPTER 17[a]

How the Appearance of Society in the United States Is at the Very Same Time Agitated and Monotonous[b]

It seems that nothing is more appropriate for exciting and feeding curiosity than the appearance of the United States. Fortunes, ideas, laws vary constantly there. You would say that immobile nature itself is mobile, so much is it transformed every day under the hand of man.

In the long run, however, the sight of so agitated a society seems monotonous, and after contemplating for a while a tableau so changeable, the spectator becomes bored.

Among aristocratic peoples, each man is more or less fixed in his sphere; but men are prodigiously dissimilar; they have essentially different passions, ideas, habits and tastes. Nothing stirs, everything varies.

In democracies, on the contrary, all men are similar and do more or less similar things. They are subject, it is true, to great and continual vicissi-

a. "The appearance of American society is agitated because men and things constantly change place. It is monotonous because all the changes are similar.

"There is in America truly speaking only a single passion, love of wealth, which is monotonous. For this passion to be satisfied, small regular and methodical actions are needed, which is also monotonous" (YTC, CVf, pp. 46–47).

b. The jacket of the chapter bears this date: "≠4 January 1838.≠" It contains three loose sheets contained in a jacket on which you read: "RUBISH OF THE CHAPTER ENTITLED: HOW THE APPEARANCE OF SOCIETY IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE LIFE OF MEN IS [*sic*] AT THE VERY SAME TIME AGITATED AND MONOTONOUS./

"This rubish contains more things than usual to see again." Despite Tocqueville's remark, the notes do not present many differences with the chapter. The other *rubish* also contains notes and drafts of this chapter.

tudes; but, since the same successes and the same reverses recur continually, only the name of the actors is different; the play is the same. The appearance of American society is agitated, because men and things change constantly; and it is monotonous, because all the changes are the same.

The men who live in democratic times have many passions; but most of their passions end in the love of wealth or come from it. That is not because their souls are smaller, but because then the importance of money is really greater.[c]

When fellow citizens are all independent and indifferent, it is only by paying that you can obtain the cooperation of each one of them; this infinitely multiplies the use of wealth and increases its value.

Since the prestige that was attached to ancient things has disappeared, birth, state, profession no longer distinguish men, or scarcely distinguish them; there remains hardly anything except money that creates very visible differences between them and that can put a few of them beyond comparison. The distinction that arises from wealth is increased by the disappearance and lessening of all the other distinctions.

c. Among all the passions of the Americans there is one that the influence of the social state has made predominate over all the others and has so to speak made unique. I am speaking about the love of wealth. The inhabitant of the United States has put his energy and his boldness in the service of this passion, which I would not be afraid to call central since in America all the movements of the soul end up there. Now, love of wealth[1] has this singular character that, however disordered it is, it needs order and *rules* to be satisfied. It is methodical even in the greatest deviations. So the same passion that leads the American, at every moment, to risk his fortune, his reputation, his life in order to gain well-being, forces him to subject himself to laborious and peaceful habits and *binds* his actions to certain precise and detailed *rules* that do not vary. It is by a succession of small, regular and uniform actions that [he (ed.)] arrives at opulence or ruin and despair, and you can say, although at first it seems surprising, that *it is* the very violence of his desires that contributes more than anything else to making his existence monotonous. His passions disturb and compromise his life, but do not make it varied.

(1) Édouard observes rightly that it is not all love of wealth and among all people who have this character, but in certain circumstances and among certain nations, among certain men, and that that must be made apparent (*Rubish,* 2).

Among aristocratic peoples, money leads to only a few points on the vast circumference of desires; in democracies, it seems to lead to all.

So love of wealth, as principal or accessory, is usually found at the bottom of the actions of Americans; this gives all their passions a family air, and does not take long to make the tableau tiring.

This perpetual return of the same passion is monotonous; the particular procedures that this passion uses to become satisfied are monotonous as well.

In a sound and peaceful democracy, like that of the United States, where you cannot become rich either by war, or by public employment, or by political confiscations, love of wealth directs men principally toward industry. Now, industry, which often brings such great disturbances and such great disasters, can nonetheless prosper only with the aid of very regular habits and by a long succession of small, very uniform actions. Habits are all the more regular and actions more uniform as the passion is more intense. You can say that it is the very violence of their desires that makes the Americans so methodical. It disturbs their soul, but it makes their life orderly.

What I say about America applies, moreover, to nearly all the men of our times. Variety is disappearing from the human species; the same ways of acting, thinking and feeling are found in all the corners of the world.[d] That happens not only because all peoples are frequenting each

d. Originality./

Perhaps to put with monotony./

It is necessary to be different from your fellows in order to envisage the world in another way [v: to think differently from them].

It is necessary to feel strong and independent from them in order to *dare* to act in your own way and to follow alone your own path [v: to show what you think].

These two *conditions* are found only where *conditions* are very unequal, and where men exist who are powerful enough by themselves to *dare* to show without fear what distinguishes them from the rest of men and sometimes to glory in it.

The result is that originality of mind and manners [v: of ideas and of actions] is much more common among aristocratic peoples than among others, above all among aristocratic peoples who enjoy {great} {political} liberty. The political state then allows the differences given birth by the social state to be shown.

other more and are copying each other more faithfully, but also because in each country men, putting aside more and more the ideas and sentiments particular to a caste, to a profession, to a family, come simultaneously to what is closest to the constitution of man, which is everywhere the same.[e] They thus become similar, although they do not imitate each other. They are like travelers spread throughout a large forest in which all roads lead to the same point. If all see the central point at the same time and turn their steps in this direction, they come imperceptibly closer to one another, without seeking each other, without seeing each other, without knowing each other, and finally they will be surprised to see themselves gathered in the same place.[f] All peoples who take as the aim of their studies and their imitation, not a particular man, but man himself, will end up by meeting with the same mores, like these travelers at the center point.

Among such a people originality ends by becoming a national habit that is found afterward among the individuals of all ranks.[1]

Each man ends by contracting the habit of following in everything his personal *impulses,* and originality becomes a trait of the national physiognomy that is found among all individuals.

There is no man who gives more prominence to individual [v: capricious] mood and who pushes singularity closer to peculiar ways and extravagance than the English. There are none ≠of them≠ who depart less from the common road than the Americans. <The most powerful confine themselves there as narrowly as the least.>

But the Americans and the English have the same origin. The social state alone makes the difference.

20 April 1838.

1. Can you say that originality is a habit? (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 8–9).

e. After the prejudices of profession, caste, family have disappeared in order to yield to generative and general ideas, men are still divided by the prejudices of nation, which present the final obstacle to the boldness and generalization of thought, but this classification of human thought by nation cannot endure for long if several nations adopt a democratic social state at the same time. Since all these nations then take man himself as goal of their inquiry and since man is the same everywhere, a multitude of their ideas ends up by being similar, not because they imitate each other (which often happens), but because they are simultaneously coming closer to the same thing without consulting about it.

[In the margin] The destruction of small sovereignties and the destruction of castes and of aristocratic ranks produce analogous effects; from them result a generalization of thought and a greater boldness to conceive new thoughts (*Rubish,* 2).

f. "<This central point in philosophy is the study of man>" (*Rubish,* 2).

CHAPTER 18[a]

Of Honor in the United States and in Democratic Societies[1]

It seems that men use two very distinct methods in the public judgment that they make about the actions of their fellows: sometimes they judge

a. Honor derives from the particular needs of certain men. Every particular association has its honor.

This proved by feudal honor, applicable to American honor.

What must be understood by American honor.

1. It differs from feudal honor by the nature of its prescriptions.

2. It differs from it also by the number of its prescriptions, by their clarity, their precision; the power with which it makes them followed.

That more and more true as citizens become more similar and nations more alike (YTC, CVf, p. 47).

The drafts of this chapter are found in three different jackets. Two of them bear the same title as the chapter; the third bears the following title: "WHY MEN ARE MORE UNCONCERNED ABOUT THEIR HONOR IN DEMOCRACIES. To *examine separately.* Subtle and perhaps false idea."

In pencil on the first page of an old version: "<The chapter is a bit too theoretical. General impression of Édouard>" (*Rubish,* 2). In the beginning, the ideas on honor seem to have belonged to the chapters on the army (see note b of pp. 1070–71).

1. *The word* honor *is not always taken in the same sense in French.*

1. It means first the esteem, the glory, the consideration that you get from your fellows; it is in this sense that you say win honor.

2. Honor also means the ensemble of rules by the aid of which you obtain this glory, this esteem, and this consideration. This is how you say that a man has always conformed strictly to the laws of honor; that he has forfeited honor. *While writing the present chapter, I have always taken the word* honor *in this last sense.*

[The reader will perhaps find this note superfluous, but when your language is poor, you must not be miserly with definitions.]

them according to the simple notions of the just and the unjust, which are spread over the whole earth; sometimes they assess them with the aid of very particular notions that belong only to one country and to one period. Often it happens that these two rules differ; sometimes they conflict with each other, but never do they merge entirely or cancel each other out.[b]

Honor, in the time of its greatest power, governs the will more than belief, and men, even if they submit without hesitation and without murmuring to its commandments, still feel, by a kind of obscure but powerful instinct, that a more general, more ancient and more holy law exists, which they sometimes disobey without ceasing to know it. There are actions that have been judged upright and dishonoring at the same time. The refusal of a duel has often been in this category.

I believe that you can explain these phenomena other than by the caprice of certain individuals and certain peoples, as has been done until now.

[The whim of men enters into it only partly.]

Humanity feels permanent and general needs, which have given birth to moral laws; to their disregard all men have naturally attached, in all places and in all times, the ideas of blame and shame. They have called *doing evil* to evade them, *doing good* to submit to them.[c]

Established as well, within the vast human association, are more restricted associations, which are called peoples, and amid the latter, others smaller still, which are called classes or castes.

Each one of these associations forms like a particular species within the

b. On the jacket of the manuscript: "The capital vice of this entire chapter, what makes it sound *false,* is that I give to honor a unique source while it has several. Honor is without doubt based on particular needs arising either from the social and political state, or from the physical constitution and climate. It arises as well, whatever I say, from the whim of men.

"Whim has a part, but it is the smallest.

"<Baugy, 27 January 1838.>"

c. "There are certain general rules that are necessary to the existence and to the well-being of human societies whatever the time, the place, the laws; individual conscience points these rules out to all men and public reason forces them to conform to them. Voluntary obedience to each of these general laws is virtue" (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 58–59).

human race; and although it does not differ essentially from the mass of men, it holds itself a little apart and feels needs that are its own. These are the special needs that modify in some fashion and in certain countries the way of envisaging human actions and the esteem that is suitable to give to them.[d]

The general and permanent interest of humanity is that men do not kill each other; but it can happen that the particular and temporary interest of a people or of a class is, in certain cases, to excuse and even to honor the homicide.[e]

d. I must be careful, Éd[ouard (ed.)] told me, not to destroy in this way the (illegible word) of virtue and to bring the mind of the reader to the conclusion that virtue is not always necessary, or even useful to men. To reflect on that./

I fear being too absolute by saying that honor comes from the special needs of a special society, and that consequently it is always useful and often necessary for its existence, which would legitimize in a way all its immoralities and its extravagances to the detriment of virtue. To say that honor is explained by the special constitution of associations, that is incontestable, but to add that it is *necessary* for their existence, isn't that to go too far in a multitude of cases?

There is in honor an element different from the needs and the interests of those who conceive it. That seems to me at least very probable upon examination.

[To the side: Use the Blacks to prove how the point of honor can become intense (illegible word) powerful, as soon as the social state departs from nature.]

Religion, climate, race must influence the notions of honor. Perhaps it would be necessary to grant a part to all of that. My idea would only be more correct, by becoming less general and less absolute.

Let us never lose sight of the fact that honor is the ensemble of opinions relating to the judgment of human actions, in view of the glory or the shame that our fellows attach to them. This forms a radical difference between honor and virtue, apart from all the other differences.

[To the side] Say somewhere that an extraordinary honor announces an extraordinary social state and vice versa. That generalizes the past in a useful way (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 61–62).

e. There is an idea that crosses my mind at every instant; I must finally try to look at it one moment and confront it.

I fear that the outcome of my chapter is that true and false, just and unjust, good and evil, vice and virtue are only relative things depending on the perspective from which you see them, a result that I would be very upset to reach, for I believe it false; and in addition such an opinion would be in clear contradiction to the ensemble of my opinions. I am at this moment too tired of my subject to see these questions clearly, but I must come back to them with a fresh mind./

[In the margin: Good and evil exist apart from the blame or the praise of certain

Honor is nothing other than this particular rule based on a particular condition, with the aid of which a people or a class distributes blame or praise.[f]

There is nothing more unproductive for the human mind than an abstract idea. So I hasten to run toward facts. An example will cast light on my thought.

I will choose the most extraordinary type of honor that has ever appeared in the world, and the one that we know the best: aristocratic honor born

men and even of humanity. What I am looking for here is not what is good or evil in an absolute way, but what men praise or blame. This is capital.

How, moreover, to define evil, if not what is harmful to humanity, and good what is useful to it?

Where is our (three illegible words)?

I do not want to say that there is no absolute good in human actions, but only that the particular interests of certain men can lead them to attribute arbitrarily to certain actions a particular value, and that this value becomes the rule of those who act with praise or blame in view, that is, by *honor.*]

To act by *virtue,* that is to do what you believe good without other motive than the pleasure of doing it and the idea of complying with a duty. To act by *honor,* that is to act not with absolute good or evil in view, but in consideration of what our fellows think of it and of the shame or the glory that will result from it.

The rule of the first man is within himself, it is *conscience.*

The rule of the other is outside, it is *opinion.*

The goal of this chapter is to show the origin and the effects of this opinion (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 62–63).

f. The recompense of the man who follows honor is more assured and more immediate than *that of the one who follows virtue. That is why men have never taught [that (ed.)] virtue* is in view of God and of yourself, *honor in view of opinion.* Why? So that you can place in the other world the recompense of those who submit to the *laws of honor.* Judgment, discernment, spiritual effort are necessary for virtue; only memory is necessary to conform to honor.

[In the margin: Honor, visible rule, *convenient for actions, less perfect,* more sure./

Sometimes finally the rule makes an action indifferent in the eyes of virtue into a matter of glory or of shame. Virtue, flexible; honor, inflexible] (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 60).

within feudal society. I will explain it with the aid of what precedes, and I will explain what precedes by it.[g]

I do not have to search here when and how the aristocracy of the Middle Ages was born, why it separated itself so profoundly from the rest of the nation, what had established and consolidated its power. I find it in place, and I seek to understand why it considered most human actions in such a particular light.

What strikes me first is that in the feudal world actions were not always praised or blamed by reason of their intrinsic value, but that sometimes they happened to be valued solely in relation to the author or the subject of the actions, which is repugnant to the general conscience of humanity. So certain actions that dishonored a nobleman were indifferent on the part of the commoner; others changed character depending on whether the person who suffered them belonged to the aristocracy or lived outside of it.

When these different opinions were born, the nobility formed a separate body, in the middle of the people, whom it dominated from the inaccessible heights to which it had withdrawn. To maintain this particular position that created its strength, it not only needed political privileges; it had to have virtues and vices for its exclusive use [in order to continue to distinguish itself in all things from what was outside or below it].

That some particular virtue or some particular vice belonged to the nobility rather than to commoners; that some particular action was neutral when it involved a villein or blameworthy when it concerned a nobleman, that is what was often arbitrary; but that honor or shame was attached to the actions of a man depending on his condition, that is what resulted from the very constitution of an aristocratic society. That was seen, in fact, in all the countries that had an aristocracy. As long as a single vestige of it remains, these singularities are still found: to seduce a young woman of color hardly harms the reputation of an American man; to marry her dishonors him.[h]

g. A draft of what follows exists in YTC, CVk, 1 (pp. 64–73). Tocqueville noted on the jacket: "Review carefully these variants [illegible word] *this 25 October 1839.*

"Piece that I reworked so laboriously that I fear that I have ruined it.

"October 1839" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 64).

h. Édouard considers it of the greatest [importance? (ed.)] to include this./

In certain cases, feudal honor prescribed vengeance and stigmatized pardoning insults; in others it imperiously commanded men to master themselves; it ordered forgetting self. It did not make a law of humanity or of gentleness; but it praised generosity; it valued liberality more than benevolence; it allowed someone to enrich himself by games of chance, by war, but not by work; it preferred great crimes to small gains. Greed revolted it less than avarice, violence often pleased it, while guile and treason always appeared contemptible to it.

These bizarre notions were not born solely out of the caprice of those who had conceived them.

A class that has succeeded in putting itself above and at the head of all the others, and that makes constant efforts to maintain itself at this supreme rank, must particularly honor the virtues that have grandeur and brilliance, and that can be easily combined with pride and love of power. Such a class

It is impossible that there is not something useful to draw from the opinions of the Americans on Blacks and from the opinion suggested to them by the presence of Blacks.

In the South of the United States:

It is shameful to become familiar with a Black, to receive one at home even though he is free and rich, unspeakable to marry one.

It is not shameful to mistreat one, to seduce one. A host of actions, rebuked when they concern a white, are not suppressed by public opinion when they concern a Black. There are certain virtues and certain vices that are thought to be principally appropriate to him.

In the same portion of the Union, it is glorious to be idle, to be a duelist, a good horseman, a good hunter, to be magnificent in manners, opulent, generous, not to let others be disrespectful to you, to be very susceptible to insults, to keep your word scrupulously, little esteem for industry.

These are in a word the opinions of the aristocracy of the Middle Ages (the opposite of what is seen in the North, so that from one side aristocratic honor, from the other democratic) modified and softened by these causes.

It is not a warrior aristocracy.

Its position gives it the taste for the acquisition of wealth and for agriculture.

Its intimate connection with the North suggests to it many opinions not in harmony with the social state and that it would not have if it was isolated.

The absence of hierarchy in its ranks./

The difficulty of making use of all of that is that what I have just said constitutes an aristocratic honor and that, as to America, my goal and my interest is to get imperceptibly into democratic honor. That is, however, very interesting and could perhaps be placed at the head of *America* (*Rubish,* 2).

is not afraid of upsetting the natural order of conscience, in order to put these virtues above all the others. You even conceive that it readily raises certain bold and brilliant vices above peaceful and modest virtues. It is in a way forced to do so by its condition.

[≠These singular opinions arise naturally from the singularities of the social state.≠]

Before all virtues and in the place of a great number of them, the nobles of the Middles Ages put military courage [while they considered fear as the most shameful and most irreparable of weaknesses].

That too was a singular opinion that arose necessarily from the singularity of the social state.

Feudal aristocracy was born by war and for war; it had found its power in arms and it maintained it by arms; so nothing was more necessary for it than military courage; and it was natural that the aristocracy glorified it above all the rest. So everything that exhibited military courage externally, even if it were at the expense of reason and humanity, was approved and often commanded by the aristocracy. The whim of men was found only in the detail.

That a man regarded receiving a slap on the cheek as an enormous insult and was obliged to kill in single combat the man who had lightly struck him in this way, that was arbitrary; but that a nobleman could not receive an insult peacefully and was dishonored if he allowed himself to be struck without fighting, that sprang from the very principles and needs of a military aristocracy.

So it was true, to a certain point, to say that honor had capricious aspects; but the caprices of honor were always confined within certain necessary limits. This particular rule, called honor by our fathers, is so far from seeming to me an arbitrary law, that I would easily undertake to connect its most incoherent and most bizarre prescriptions to a small number of fixed and invariable needs of feudal societies.

If I followed feudal honor into the field of politics, I would not have any more difficulty explaining its workings.

The social state and political institutions of the Middle Ages were such that national power never directly governed the citizens. National power did not so to speak exist in their eyes; each man knew only a certain man

whom he was obliged to obey. It was by the latter that, without knowing it, all the others were attached. So in feudal societies, all public order turned on the sentiment of fidelity to the very person of the lord. That destroyed, you fell immediately into anarchy.

Fidelity to the political head was, moreover, a sentiment whose value all the members of the aristocracy saw every day, for each one of them was at the same time lord and vassal and had to command as well as obey.

To remain faithful to your lord, to sacrifice yourself for him as needed, to share his good or bad fortune, to help him in his undertakings whatever they were, such were the first prescriptions of feudal honor in political matters. The treason of the vassal was condemned by opinion with an extraordinary severity. A particularly ignominious name was created for it; it was called a *felony.*

[≠Fidelity to the feudal head becomes {on the contrary, a kind of religion}.≠]

You find, on the contrary, in the Middle Ages only a few traces of a passion that animated ancient societies [≠and that reappeared among modern ones as the feudal world was transformed.≠]. I mean patriotism.[j] The very noun patriotism is not old in our language.[2]

j. Of patriotism.

(How to link this to democracy?)

[In the margin: Parallel of ancient and modern patriotism.

The Romans and the Americans, real, profound, dogmatic, simple, rational, egoistic, superficial, talkative.]

To judge patriotism, it must not be taken when it acts in the direction of the passions that serve it as a vehicle, but on the contrary when it must struggle against those same passions. When I see the French people rushing to the borders in 1792, I am in doubt about whether they came to defend France or the Revolution that assured the triumph of democracy [v: equality]. But when in Rome the Senate goes as a body before Varro, man of the people, raised by the caprice of the people to the Consulate, and thanks him for not having lost hope in the country, I see into the bottom of hearts and I no longer doubt.

I do not claim that the patriotism that is combined with an interest of party is a thing without value. I am only saying that to judge it well, it must be reduced to itself. Everything that shakes the human heart and calls it beyond the material interests of life, and raises it above fear of death is a great thing (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 13–14).

2. *The word* patrie *itself is found among French authors only after the XVIth century.*

Feudal institutions concealed country from view; they made love of it less necessary. They caused the nation to be forgotten while making you passionate about one man. Consequently you do not see that feudal honor ever made it a strict law to remain faithful to your country.

It is not that love of country did not exist in the hearts of our fathers; but it formed a kind of weak and obscure instinct, which became clearer and stronger as classes were destroyed and [≠political≠] power was centralized.

This is clearly seen in the contrasting judgments that the peoples of Europe bring to the different facts of their history, depending on the generation that judges them. What principally dishonored the High Constable de Bourbon in the eyes of his contemporaries is that he bore arms against his king; what dishonors him most in our eyes is that he waged war on his country. We stigmatize his actions as much as our ancestors, but for other reasons.

I have chosen feudal honor to clarify my thought, because feudal honor has more marked and better features than any other. I could have taken my example from elsewhere; I would have reached the same end by another road.[k]

k. I have only wanted to examine among feudal peoples solely the opinions of the aristocratic class. But if I had descended into the detail of these complicated societies ≠and if I had contemplated separately the different classes that formed the social body≠, I would have found (illegible word) an analogous spectacle.

In each one of the classes ≠of feudal society≠ as well as within the aristocracy reigned in fact a public opinion that distributed in a sovereign way praise and blame according to a rule that it had created for its own use {and that was not always} consistent . . .

[In the margin: ≠All of this is not necessary in itself, but slows and hinders the movement of the piece. To have it copied separately and probably to delete (illegible word).

Ideas to introduce somewhere in the portrait of the feudal world.≠]

The particular condition of the men who composed these classes suggested to them a particular esteem for certain human actions and a very special scorn for certain others, and it led them to attach to some of their actions glory or shame, according to a measure that was their own. In that time, opinions, although aristocratic, colored more or less all human opinions; it was easy, however, to recognize a bourgeois honor, one of villeins, one of serfs, like an honor of nobles. Each one of them differed from aristocratic honor in its rules and was similar to it in its cause and in its objective (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 71–72).

Although we know the Romans less well than our ancestors, we nonetheless know that there existed among them, in regard to glory and dishonor, particular opinions that did not flow only from general notions of good and evil. Many human actions there were considered in a different light, depending on whether it concerned a citizen or a foreigner, a free man or a slave; certain vices were glorified, certain virtues were raised above all others.

"Now in that time," says Plutarch in the life of Coriolanus, "valor was honored and valued in Rome above all other virtues. What attests to this is that it was called *virtus,* the very noun for virtue, attributing the name of the common type to a particular species. So much so that virtue in Latin was just like saying valor." Who does not recognize in that the particular need of that singular association formed to conquer the world?

Each nation will lend itself to analogous observations; for, as I said above, every time that men gather together in a particular society, a code of honor becomes immediately established among them, that is to say an ensemble of opinions that is proper to them about what must be praised or blamed; and these particular rules always have their source in the special habits and special interests of the association.

That applies, in a certain measure, to democratic societies as to others. We are going to find the proof of it among the Americans.[3]

You still find scattered, among the opinions of the Americans, a few detached notions of the ancient aristocratic honor of Europe. These traditional opinions are in very small number; they have weak roots and little power. It is a religion of which you allow a few temples to continue to exist, but in which you no longer believe.

Amid these half-obliterated notions of an exotic honor, appear a few new opinions that constitute what could today be called American honor.

I have shown how the Americans were pushed incessantly toward com-

3. *I am speaking here about the Americans*[m] *who inhabit the countries where slavery does not exist. They are the only ones who can present the complete image of a democratic society.*

m. In the drafts: "I am speaking principally about the Americans of New England and of the states without slaves" (*Rubish,* 2).

merce and industry. Their origin, their social state, their political institutions, and the very place that they inhabit draw them irresistibly in this direction. So they form, at present, an almost exclusively industrial and commercial association, placed at the heart of a new and immense country that its principal purpose is to exploit. Such is the characteristic feature that, today, most particularly distinguishes the American people from all the others.

All the peaceful virtues that tend to give a regular bearing to the social body and tend to favor trade must therefore be especially honored among this people, and you cannot neglect them without falling into public scorn.

All the turbulent virtues that often give brilliance, but even more often give trouble to a society, occupy on the contrary a subordinate rank in the opinion of this same people. You can neglect them without losing the esteem of your fellow citizens, and you would perhaps risk losing it by acquiring them.

The Americans make no less an arbitrary classification of the vices.

There are certain tendencies, blameworthy in the eyes of the general reason and of the universal conscience of humanity, that find themselves in agreement with the particular and temporary needs of the American association; and it condemns them only weakly, sometimes it praises them. I will cite particularly the love of wealth and the secondary tendencies that are connected to it. In order to clear, to make fruitful, to transform this vast uninhabited continent that is his domain, the American must have the daily support of an energetic passion; this passion can only be the love of wealth; so the passion for wealth has no stigma attached to it in America, and provided that it does not go beyond the limits assigned to it by public order, it is honored. The American calls a noble and estimable ambition what our fathers of the Middle Ages named servile cupidity; in the same way the American gives the name of blind and barbaric fury to the conquering fervor and warrior spirit that threw our fathers into new battles every day.

In the United States, fortunes are easily destroyed and rise again. The country is without limits and full of inexhaustible resources. The people have all the needs and all the appetites of a being who is growing, and

whatever efforts he makes, he is always surrounded by more goods than he is able to grasp. What is to be feared among such a people is not the ruin of a few individuals, soon repaired, it is the inactivity and indolence of all. Boldness in industrial enterprises is the first cause of its rapid progress, its strength, its grandeur. Industry is for it like a vast lottery in which a small number of men lose every day, but in which the State wins constantly; so such a people must see boldness with favor and honor it in matters of industry. Now, every bold enterprise imperils the fortune of the one who devotes himself to it and the fortune of all those who trust in him. The Americans, who make commercial temerity into a kind of virtue, cannot, in any case whatsoever, stigmatize those who are daring.

That is why in the United States such a singular indulgence is shown for the merchant who goes bankrupt; the honor of the latter does not suffer from such an accident. In that, the Americans differ, not only from European peoples, but from all the commercial nations of today; but then, in their position and their needs, they do not resemble any of them.

In America, all the vices that are of a nature to alter the purity of morals and to destroy the conjugal union are treated with a severity unknown to the rest of the world. That contrasts strangely, at first view, with the tolerance that is shown there on other points. You are surprised to meet among the same people a morality so lax and so austere.

These things are not as inconsistent as you suppose. Public opinion, in the United States, only mildly represses love of wealth, which serves the industrial greatness and prosperity of the nation; and it particularly condemns bad morals, which distract the human mind from the search for well-being and disturbs the internal order of the family, so necessary to the success of business. So in order to be respected by their fellows, Americans are forced to yield to regular habits. In this sense you can say that they put their honor in being chaste.

American honor agrees with the old honor of Europe on one point: it puts courage at the head of virtues, and makes it the greatest of moral necessities for man; but it does not envisage courage in the same way.

In the United States, warrior valor is little prized; the courage that is known the best and esteemed the most is the one that makes you face the

furies of the Ocean in order to arrive earliest in port, bear without complaint the miseries of the wilderness, and its solitude, more cruel than all the miseries; the courage that makes you almost insensitive to the sudden reversal of a fortune painfully acquired, and immediately suggests new efforts to build a new one. Courage of this type is principally necessary for the maintenance and the prosperity of the American association, and it is particularly honored and glorified by it. You cannot show yourself lacking in it, without dishonor.

I find a final feature; it will really put the idea of this chapter into relief.

In a democratic society, like that of the United States, where fortunes are small and poorly assured, everyone works, and work leads to everything. That has turned the point of honor around and directed it against idleness.

I sometimes met in America rich young men, enemies by temperament of all difficult effort, who were forced to take up a profession. Their nature and their fortune allowed them to remain idle; public opinion imperiously forbid it to them, and they had to obey.[n] I have often seen, on the contrary, among European nations where the aristocracy still struggles against the torrent that carries it along, I have seen, I say, men goaded constantly by their needs and their desires who remain idle in order not to lose the esteem of their equals, and who subject themselves more easily to boredom and want than to work.

Who does not see in these two so opposite obligations two different rules, both of which emanate nonetheless from honor?

What our fathers called honor above all was, truly speaking, only one of its forms. They gave a generic name to what was only a type. [If the aristocratic honor of the Middle Ages had more marked features and a physiognomy more extraordinary than all that had preceded and followed it, that was only because it was born amidst the most exceptional social state that ever existed and the one most removed from the natural and ordinary condition of humanity. Never in fact, in our western world, had men been separated by so many artificial barriers and felt more particular

n. To the side: "<The question is to know if I must say only that about America. I believe that the reader expects more and would be surprised.>"

needs.][o] So honor is found in democratic centuries as in times of aristocracy. But it will not be difficult to show that in the former it presents another physiognomy.

Not only are its prescriptions different, we are going to see that they are fewer and less clear and that its laws are followed with less vigor.

A caste is always in a much more particular situation than a people. There is nothing more exceptional in the world than a small society always composed of the same families, like the aristocracy of the Middle Ages, for example, and whose objective is to concentrate and to hold enlightenment, wealth and power in its hands exclusively and by heredity.

Now, the more exceptional the position of a society is, the more numerous are its special needs, and the more the notions of its honor, which correspond to its needs, increase.

So the prescriptions of honor will always be fewer among a people that is not divided into castes, than among another. If nations come to be established where it is difficult even to find classes, honor will be limited there to a small number of precepts, and those precepts will be less and less removed from the moral laws adopted by the generality of humanity.

Thus the prescriptions of honor will be less bizarre and fewer in a democratic nation than in an aristocratic one.

They will also be more obscure; that results necessarily from what precedes.

Since the characteristic features of honor are less numerous and less singular, it must often be difficult to discern them.

There are still other reasons.

Among the aristocratic nations of the Middle Ages the generations succeeded each other in vain; each family was like an immortal and perpetually immobile man;[p] ideas varied scarcely more than conditions.

o. In the margin: "Piece to delete probably. To see again."

p. To the side: "<Good sentence, but which is, I believe, found elsewhere.>"

So each man had always before his eyes the same objects, which he envisaged from the same point of view; little by little he saw into the slightest details, and his perception could not fail, in the long run, to become clear and distinct. Thus, not only did the men of feudal times have very extraordinary opinions that constituted their honor, but also each one of these opinions was shaped in their minds in a clear-cut and precise way.

It can never be the same in a country like America, where all the citizens are in motion; where society, itself changing every day, changes its opinions with its needs. In such a country, you catch a glimpse of the rule of honor; you rarely have the leisure to consider it intently.

Were society immobile, it would still be difficult to fix the meaning that must be given to the word honor.

In the Middle Ages, since each class had its honor, the same opinion was never accepted simultaneously by a very great number of men, which allowed giving it a fixed and precise form; all the more so since all those who accepted it, all having a perfectly identical and very exceptional position, found a natural disposition to agree on the prescriptions of a law that was made only for them alone.

Honor thus became a complete and detailed code in which everything was foreseen and ordered in advance, and which presented a fixed and always visible rule to human actions. Among a democratic nation like the American people, where ranks are mixed and where the entire society forms only a single mass, all of whose elements are analogous without being entirely the same, you can never exactly agree in advance about what is allowed and forbidden by honor.

There exist indeed, within this people, certain national needs that give birth to common opinions in the matter of honor; but such opinions never present themselves at the same time, in the same manner and with equal force to the mind of all the citizens; the law of honor exists, but it often lacks interpreters.

The confusion is even still greater in a democratic country like ours,[q] in which the different classes that composed the old society, starting to mingle

q. The manuscript says: ". . . among a people in which the different classes . . ."

without yet being able to blend, bring to each other every day the various and often contradictory notions of their honor; in which each man, following his caprices, abandons one part of the opinions of his fathers and holds onto the other; so that amid so many arbitrary measures, a common rule can never be established. It is nearly impossible then to say in advance what actions will be honored or stigmatized. These are miserable times, but they do not last.

Among democratic nations, honor, not being well defined, is necessarily less powerful; for it is difficult to apply with certainty and firmness a law that is imperfectly known.[r] Public opinion, which is the natural and sovereign interpreter of the law of honor, not seeing distinctly in which direction it is appropriate to tip blame or praise, only delivers its judgment with hesitation. Sometimes it happens that it contradicts itself; often it remains immobile and lets things happen.

[≠The law of honor, were it clear, would still be weak among democratic peoples by the sole fact that its not very numerous prescriptions are few. For the principal strength of a body of laws comes from the fact that it extends at the same time to a multitude of matters and, every day in a thousand diverse ways, bends the human mind to obedience. A law that provides for just a few cases and that is only applied here and there is always feeble.

Now, the prescriptions of honor are always more numerous and less detailed to the extent that classes, not being as close to each other, have fewer interests apart from the mass and fewer particular needs.≠]

The relative weakness of honor in democracy is due to several other causes.

In aristocratic countries, the same honor is never accepted except by a certain, often limited number of men, always separated from the rest of their fellows. So honor easily mixes and mingles, in the minds of those men,

r. "<Delicate idea and a little subtle but true at bottom. To include./

"The pleasure that honor gives is an intellectual and moral enjoyment that must lose its value like all the others of this type in democratic centuries, even if the notions of honor did not become fewer and more confused>" (In the jacket WHY MEN . . . , *Rubish,* 2).

with the idea of all that distinguishes them. It appears to them like the distinctive feature of their physiognomy; they apply its different rules with all the ardor of personal interest, and if I can express myself in this way, they bring passion to obeying it.

This truth manifests itself very clearly when you read the customary laws of the Middle Ages, on the point of legal duels.[s] You see there that the nobles were bound, in their quarrels, to use the lance and the sword, while the villeins used the cudgel with each other, "it being understood," the laws add, *"that the villeins have no honor."* That did not mean, as we imagine today, that those men were dishonorable; it meant only that their actions were not judged by the same rules as those of the aristocracy.[t]

s. The duel. Why the duel diminishes as nations become more democratic. The progress of public reason is not a sufficient cause. The duel is the sanction of the law of civility. When the law becomes uncertain and is almost abolished, it ceases by itself. But it remains a means of vengeance.

[In the margin: Almost purposeless efforts of the legislators of today who want to destroy the duel. The duel is attacked by a general cause more powerful than legislation, and that cause alone is strong enough to destroy it.]

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No one fights in the United States for conventional insults, but for insults that are considered as mortal in the eyes of reason, such as the subornation of a woman or of a girl, for example. And then they fight to the death. The custom of the duel must tend to disappear everywhere military aristocratic honor is disappearing. So what I said in the preceding chapter explains sufficiently why the custom of the duel is gradually growing weaker among modern peoples and particularly among democratic nations. But there are still other reasons, and were the duel held in honor by the opinion of these peoples it would still be more difficult to find the occasion to fight a duel.

Great number of those to whom it would be necessary to answer.

Uncertainty of the insult. The duel no longer keeps order. Men do not kill each other and (illegible word) to take (illegible word); the duel for conventional insult must first disappear, then finally the duel for real insult, rarer duel and more cruel. Example: United States of the South. States of the North.

Here they still fight, there they do almost nothing more than go to court.

The Americans fight when the Romans murdered (YTC, Cva, pp. 51–52). During the judicial year 1828 or 1829, Tocqueville gave a speech on the duel (André Jardin, *Alexis de Tocqueville,* p. 75). Beaumont dedicated a long commentary to duels in *Marie* (I, pp. 370–77).

t. This paragraph is not found in the manuscript.

What is astonishing, at first view, is that, when honor reigns with this full power, its prescriptions are in general very strange, so that it seems to be obeyed better the more it appears to diverge from reason; from that it has sometimes been concluded that feudal honor was strong, because of its very extravagance.

These two things have, in fact, the same origin; but they are not derived from each other.

Honor is bizarre in proportion as it represents more particular needs felt by a smaller number of men; and it is powerful because it represents needs of this type. So honor is not powerful because it is bizarre; but it is bizarre and powerful because of the same cause.

I will make another remark.

Among aristocratic peoples, all ranks differ, but all ranks are fixed; each man occupies in his sphere a place that he cannot leave, and in which he lives amid other men bound around him in the same way. So among these nations, no one can hope or fear not being seen; there is no man placed so low who does not have his stage, and who can, by his obscurity, escape from blame or from praise.

In democratic States, on the contrary, where all citizens are merged in the same crowd and are constantly in motion, public opinion has nothing to hold on to; its subject disappears at every instant and escapes.[u] So honor will always be less imperious and less pressing; for honor acts only with the public in mind, different in that from simple virtue,[v] which lives on its own and is satisfied with its testimony.

u. <Public opinion, which is the sovereign judge in the matter of honor, is often uncertain. It does not discern clearly> for it is difficult to apply with certainty and firmness a rule that is only imperfectly known. So public opinion, which is the natural and sovereign interpreter of honor, almost always strikes while hesitating and often its voice is lost amid the thousand discordant noises that arise on all sides, and since it constantly changes interpreters you always imagine that its decision is not without appeal (In the jacket WHY THE MEN . . . , *Rubish,* 2).

v. Montesquieu spoke about our honor and not about honor./
Virtue. More perfect rule, less easy to follow./
We must never lose sight of this capital difference between virtue and honor, that

virtue leads men to want to do good for the pleasure of the good, that is at least its claim, while honor, by its own admission, has for principal and almost unique goal to be seen and approved. It is always a bit of a theatrical virtue.

All of my deduction of ideas does not, up to now, provide me with the reason for this (*Rubish,* 2).

On the jacket of the manuscript you read: "Read what Montesquieu wrote on honor, books III, IV and XXVIII." A jacket of the *rubish* of this chapter bears the following note: "In these *rubish* there are several good ideas that I left behind and that it would be good to reexamine." This jacket contains two unpublished letters. The first is a letter of M. Feuillet, of the Royal Institute, to Hervé de Tocqueville, in which he mentions that he has not been able to find a treatise on the dispositions of the preconception of honor and that he recommends reading the *Encyclopédie* and books III, IV, and XXVIII of *L'Esprit des lois.* The second is a letter from Hervé de Tocqueville to his son, that we reproduce here in full:

Paris, 17 January 1838.

I received your letter the evening before yesterday, my good friend. I went yesterday morning to see M. Feuillet. He asked me for twenty-four hours to research the documents that could enlighten you. You will see from his response, which I am sending to you, that he found nothing. I am going to try to gather from my memory something that may in part compensate for it.

Honor can be defined as the sentiment that leads to sacrificing everything to escape the scorn of your fellows, even life, even on some occasions virtue and religion.

In the article of the *Encyclopédie* cited by M. Feuillet you find the following definition: "The sentiment of esteem for yourself is the most delightful of all, but the most virtuous man is often overwhelmed by the weight of his imperfection and seeks in the looks, in the bearing of men, the expression of an esteem that reconciles him with himself.

"From that two kinds of honor, that which is based within ourselves, on what we are; that which is in others, based on what they think of us.

"In the man of the people, honor is the esteem that he has for himself, and his right to the esteem of the public derives from his exactitude in observing certain laws established by prejudices and by custom.

"Of these laws, some conform to reason, others are opposed to it. Honor among the most civilized nations can therefore be attached sometimes to estimable qualities and actions, often to destructive practices, sometimes to extravagant customs, sometimes even to vices.

"But why is this changing honor, almost always principal in governments, always so bizarre? Why is it placed in puerile or destructive practices? Why does it sometimes impose duties condemned by nature, purified reason and virtue? And why in certain times is it particularly attributed to certain qualities, certain actions, and in other times to actions and to qualities of an opposite type?

"The great principle of utility of David Hume must be recalled: it is utility that always decides our esteem. But certain qualities, certain talents are at various times more or less useful. Honored at first, they are less so afterward.

"If the communal status of women is not established, conjugal fidelity will be their honor. Since it is not believed that a woman can fail in fidelity to a respectable man, the honor of the husband depends on the chastity of his wife."

Such is the summary of the article from the *Encyclopédie* relating to the subject that concerns you. There is a profound sense in the sentence that relates the establishment and maintenance of the various types of honor to utility. In fact there existed in the old monarchy first a general honor and a special one for each profession. General honor consisted of abstaining from all that merits scorn. Special honor was inseparable from virtue and from integrity among magistrates, tradesmen, merchants. Only in the military profession could honor be outside of virtue, act apart from it and sometimes in opposition to it.

As civilization advanced, the aberrations of military honor penetrated the middle class and little by little extended to the lowest ranks. Currently it is understood differently in many respects. But the prejudice that an insult must be washed away by blood has survived. This is how a murderer believes he can erase the shame of his crime and attenuate it in fact by suicide, which is an additional crime.

I am going to speak about special honors. 1. That of the nobility. It obliged the nobility to devote itself to the service of the State in the profession of arms, to sacrifice for the State its life and if needed its fortune. The gentleman guilty of a crime was not dishonored if he was beheaded. Another punishment dishonored him and his descendants.

He could not marry inappropriately without failing in honor. Nonetheless, in the XVIIIth century, wealth was accepted in order to compensate for birth.

He could not exercise the mechanical arts, or do commerce. Only in Brittany, he put down his sword, went to do maritime commerce and, upon returning, took up his sword again. His quality of nobleman was as if suspended during his absence.

I believe that the nobleman could not subscribe to letters of exchange without staining his honor. He could indeed not pay suppliers, but the word bankruptcy would have dishonored him. It was the same if he did not pay gambling debts, wagers and other debts with written proof of indebtedness.

He had to be sensitive to insults and disposed to demand satisfaction. From that the proverb: being contradicted is worth being struck with the sword. A blow could be expiated only by the death of one of the two combatants. The refusal to fight and even hesitation to accept a duel caused dishonor. But also, the dishonor that should have accompanied a lot of blameworthy actions was erased by the duel. You remained guilty before the law and conscience, but ceased to be so according to honor.

It goes without saying that every base action took away honor. Moreover, there was, I believe, neither code nor court. Opinion judged, and it was more or less severe. When it had condemned, the stain was permanent. The unfortunate whom it had reached was obliged to hide himself to avoid awful affronts. Louis XIV had in truth created the court of the Marshals of France which exercised a certain jurisdiction as

If the reader has well grasped all that precedes, he must have understood that there exists, between inequality of conditions and what we have called honor, a close and necessary connection that, if I am not wrong, had not yet been clearly pointed out. So I must make a final effort to bring it clearly to light.[w]

regards honor, but I believe it concerned itself above all with the causes of duels. M. Feuillet promised me to do research on this subject. In sum, the nobleman was more dishonored than the commoner for actions that would have stained the honor of the latter. You saw yourself as dishonored by a blow of the sovereign because you could not demand satisfaction from him.

The honor of the magistrate was something else entirely. A duel would have dishonored him. His honor consisted of integrity, decency of conduct, a quiet life and a busy existence.

The tradesman was not dishonored if he refused to fight. His honor consisted of running his company well, of the clarity of his enterprises, exactitude in fulfilling his engagements, his fidelity, integrity in supplies.

There more or less, my good friend, is all that I can say on this subject. All that formerly existed has left a trace that you can see. Only honor was much more delicate and punctilious than it is now. Material interests invade the ground of honor and you allow many things that would have made you blush formerly, and that in all ranks and in all classes.

Cold is always hard and I am concerned about you. Tell Marie that I thank her for her letter. I have begun to answer her. I do not have the time to finish today. Kiss her for me and tell her to kiss you for me.

A thousand tender regards to Édouard and his family. A thousand friendly greetings from mother Guermarquer.

If I get new information, I will send it immediately./

The man declared dishonored by opinion was forced by his fellows, colleagues or comrades to give his resignation.

In January 1838, Kergorlay, on a visit to Baugy for four days, probably helped Tocqueville in drafting this chapter. The author wrote to Beaumont on 18 January: "Louis has just spent four days here; I was at that moment *tangled* in a system of ideas from which I could not extricate myself. It was a true intellectual cul-de-sac, which he got me out of in a few hours. This boy has in him a veritable mine from which he alone cannot and does not know how to draw" (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 279). The papers of the heirs of Tocqueville contain a manuscript from Kergorlay on honor with this commentary from the author: "Very remarkable piece by Louis de Kergorlay. To see again, if I do a second edition."

w. <If the reader has clearly grasped all that precedes, he must have understood that there exists a singular correlation between inequality of conditions and what we have called honor. These are two facts that derive necessarily from each other.

As conditions become equal within a people and as the citizens become more equal

A nation takes up a separate position within humanity. Apart from certain general needs inherent in the human species, it has its own particular interests and needs. Immediately established within the nation in the matter of blame and praise are certain opinions that are its own and that its citizens call honor.

Within this same nation, a caste becomes established, which, separating itself in turn from all the other classes, contracts particular needs, and the latter, in turn, give rise to special opinions.[x] The honor of this caste, bizarre mixture of the particular notions of the nation and of the still more particular notions of the caste, will diverge as far as you can imagine from the simple and general opinions of men. We have reached the extreme point; let us go back.

Ranks mingle, privileges are abolished. Since the men who compose the nation have again become similar and equal, their interests and their needs blend, and you see successively vanish all the singular notions that each caste called honor; honor now derives only from the particular needs of the nation itself; it represents its individuality among peoples.

If it were finally allowed to suppose that all races were blended and that all the peoples of the world had reached the point of having the same interests, the same needs, and of no longer being different from each other by any characteristic feature, you would cease entirely to attribute a conventional value to human actions; everyone would envisage them in the same light; the general needs of humanity, which conscience reveals to every man, would be the common measure. Then, you would no longer find in this world anything except the simple and general notions of good and evil, to which would be linked, by a natural and necessary bond, the ideas of praise and blame.

and more similar, honor does not disappear, but it becomes less strange in its precepts, less absolute and less powerful> (*Rubish,* 2).

x. In the margin: "<Here this eternal question presents itself. *Is it opinion that gave birth to fact or fact, opinion?*>"

Thus finally to contain in a single formula my whole thought, it is the dissimilarities and the inequalities of men that created honor; it grows weaker as these differences fade away, and it would disappear with them.[y]

y. On a sheet at the end of the manuscript:

To copy separately./

Of all religions, the one that has most considered the human species in its unity and has had most in view in its laws the general needs of humanity, leaving aside social state, laws, times and places, is the Christian religion.

So Christian peoples have always been and will always be very constrained in using honor whatever honor may be. It is [what (ed.)] has been the weakness of Christianity in certain periods and among certain peoples, but that is also what has established its general strength and what assures its perpetuity./

This reflection came to me today, 11 February, while reading the *Imitation.* This book was written amid all the prejudices of honor of the Middle Ages and in the country where honor reigned most despotically, and the book combats them all. It is true that Thomas d'A. [Thomas Kempis (ed.)] sometimes, according to me, forgets the general principles of Christianity in order to start at the particular duties of the religious state and on this point you could say that he combats the notions of aristocratic honor with those of monastic honor.

CHAPTER 19[a]

Why in the United States You Find So Many Ambitious Men and So Few Great Ambitions[b]

The first thing that strikes you in the United States is the innumerable multitude of those who seek to leave their original condition; and the second is the small number of great ambitions which stand out among this universal movement of ambition.[c] There are no Americans who do not

a. The democratic revolution must be clearly distinguished from democracy.

As long as the revolution lasts, ambitions are very great, but they become small when the revolution has ended.

Why:

When democracy does not prevent ambitions from being born, it at least gives them a particular character.

What this character is.

That we must try in our time to purify and to regulate ambition, but we have to be afraid of hindering it too much and impoverishing it (YTC, CVf, pp. 47–48).

b. "The chapter should rather be entitled *of the greatness of desires"* (*Rubish,* 2).

c. In the *rubish:*

Ambition in democracies./

[In the margin: A great part ideas of Louis.]

When you examine this subject attentively, you arrive at thinking this:

Democracy immensely augments the number of ambitious men and decreases the number of great ambitions. It makes all men aim a bit beyond where they are; it prevents almost anyone from aiming very far.

The cause of that is in equality of conditions. Equality of conditions and the absence of classifications gives all men the ability to change their position; these same causes prevent any man from being naturally and reasonably led to aim for a very elevated situation.

Kings think naturally of conquering kingdoms, the nobleman of governing the State or of acquiring glory. Placed very high, these great goals are close to them; and their situation as well as their taste pushes them naturally to seize them. The poor aim to acquire a mediocre fortune. Men who have a mediocre fortune aim to become

appear to be devoured by the desire to rise; but you see hardly any who seem to nourish very vast hopes or to aim very high. All want constantly to acquire property, reputation, power; few envisage all these things on a large scale. And at first view that is surprising, since you notice nothing, either in the mores or in the laws of America, that should limit desires and prevent them from taking off in all directions.[d]

rich. These goals are not as great as the first if you consider them in an absolute way; from a relative point of view they are not smaller. The desires that lead men toward the first and toward the second are the same.

≠Sometimes, however, within democracies immense ambitions are born, for what happens to the human body in savage life happens there. All the children who are born weak die there, those who survive become very strong men. The strength that made them conquer the first obstacles, pushes them very much farther.≠

This, moreover, is applicable only to established and peaceful democracies. In democracies in revolution ambitions are numerous and great; equality of conditions allows each man to change place, and fortune puts temporarily within reach of each man the greatest places. This is what has made some think in a general way that democracies push men toward great ambitions. The exception has been taken for the rule. France has served as an example for everything in order to prove the first proposition. This idea is correct in a general way only when you apply it to an army. The democratic principle introduced into an army cannot fail to create there a multitude of great ambitions and to push men toward prodigious things. An army at war is nothing else than a society in revolution. So what I have said above occasionally about society always applies to an army./

Review all of these ideas, reflect about them well before accepting them. Know if what I call a state of revolution is not after all the natural state of democracies.

If what I am saying is true, the consequences to draw from it would be important and of several sorts. A sort of weakening would result in all sentiments, and even in ideas; the source of great thoughts, of heroic tastes would be not dried up, but diminished. The remedy to that (*Rubish,* 2).

The *rubish* of this chapter contains the letter of 2 February 1838 of Tocqueville to Kergorlay and the response of Kergorlay dated 6 January, but clearly from the month of February of the same year. Tocqueville questions the recipient of his letter about the increase of small and great ambitions in democracies. Kergorlay answers that democracies increase small ambitions, but that he can say nothing about great ones. These two letters are published in the *Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 2, pp. 12–18.

d. On a sheet of the manuscript:

The generative idea of this chapter remains of doubtful truth for two reasons among others:

It seems difficult to attribute this singular state of things to equality of conditions [{democracy}]; for, at the moment when the same equality became established among us, it immediately caused almost limitless ambitions to develop.[e] I believe, however, that it is principally in the social state and democratic mores of the Americans that the cause of what precedes must be sought.

Every revolution magnifies the ambition of men. That is above all true of the revolution that overthrows an aristocracy.[f]

[The revolution that finally creates a democratic social state must be clearly distinguished from the democratic social state itself.

When a powerful aristocracy disappears suddenly amid the popular waves raised against it, it is not only men who change place; laws, ideas, mores are renewed; the entire world seems to change appearance. The old order on which humanity rested finally collapses and a new order comes to light. The authors and the witnesses of these wonders, while contemplating them, feel as if transported beyond themselves; the grandeur of the things that are taking place before their eyes and by their hands expands their soul and fills it with vast thoughts and immense desires.

Ambition then takes on an audacious and grandiose character. It appears sometimes disinterested, often sublime. That is due not to the social state of the people, but to the singular revolution that it is undergoing.][g]

1. The governmental machine is so powerful in democratic centuries that the one who succeeded in holding it in his hand can easily imagine immense projects.

2. Since all men are more or less similar, you can hope to be understood by all at the same time and to act on all, which must expand thought and raise the heart.

e. "Is it very sure that if the American statesmen had a great power they would not have a great ambition?/

"Ambition is desire to act on your fellows, to command them" (*Rubish,* 2).

f. "It is clear that if I succeeded in presenting as an absolute truth that equality *destroys ambition* and prevents *revolutions,* I would contradict a great part of my own ideas previously put forward.

"So I must be very careful there and stick with the possibility of the thing" (*Rubish,* 2).

g. In the margin: "≠All of that upon reading seems to me a bit the amplification of a man who is groping along. Style of improvisation.≠

"Read all of that to Beaumont before deleting it entirely."

Since the old barriers that separated the crowd from fame and power have fallen suddenly, an impetuous and universal upward movement takes place toward these long desired splendors whose enjoyment is finally allowed. In this first exaltation of triumph, nothing seems impossible to anyone. Not only do desires have no limits, but the power to satisfy them has hardly any. Amid this general and sudden renewal of customs and laws, in this vast confusion of all men and all rules, citizens rise and fall with an unheard-of rapidity, and power passes so quickly from hand to hand that no one should despair of seizing it in his turn.

You must remember clearly, moreover, that the men who destroy an aristocracy lived under its laws; they saw its splendors and allowed themselves, without knowing it, to be penetrated by the sentiments and the ideas that the aristocracy had conceived. So at the moment when an aristocracy dissolves, its spirit still hovers over the mass, and its instincts are conserved for a long time after it has been vanquished.

So ambitions always appear very great, as long as the democratic revolution endures; after it has finished, it will still be the same for some time.

The recollection of the extraordinary events that they have witnessed does not fade in one day from the memory of men. The passions that revolution had suggested do not disappear with it.[h] The sentiment of insta-

h. Our civil troubles have brought to light men who, by the immensity of their *genius* and of their crimes, have remained in the picture of the past like deformed but gigantesque masses that constantly and from all sides attract the sight of the crowd.

[In the margin: *19 September 1837.*

2 v.

Perhaps to mores strictly speaking.

Depraved ambition.

To ambition perhaps.]

From that is born among us a sort of depraved taste and dishonest admiration for everything that diverges in whatever fashion from the ordinary dimensions of humanity. You want to escape the common rule, no matter where. Not able to be different by your acts, you seek at least to make yourself extraordinary by your manners; if you do not do great things, you at least say bizarre things; and often, after you have failed to be a hero, you do not scorn becoming a remarkable rogue.

bility is perpetuated amid order. The idea of the ease of success outlives the strange vicissitudes that have given it birth. Desires remain very vast, while the means to satisfy them diminishes every day. The taste for great fortunes subsists, even though great fortunes become rare, and you see taking fire on all sides disproportionate and unfortunate ambitions that burn secretly and fruitlessly in the heart that harbors them.

Little by little, however, the last traces of the struggle fade; the remnants of the aristocracy finally disappear. You forget the great events that accompanied its fall; rest follows war, the dominion of rules is reborn within the new world; desires become proportionate to means; needs, ideas and sentiments become linked together; men finally come to the same level; democratic society is finally established.

If we consider a democratic people having reached this permanent and normal state, it will present to us a spectacle entirely different from the one that we have just contemplated, and we will be able to judge without difficulty that, if ambition becomes great while conditions are becoming equal, it loses this characteristic when they are equal.

Since great fortunes are divided and knowledge is widespread, no one is absolutely deprived of enlightenment or of property; since privileges and disqualifications of classes are abolished, and since men have forever broken the bonds that held them immobile, the idea of progress presents itself to the mind of each one of them; the desire to rise is born at the same time in all hearts; each man wants to leave his place. Ambition is the universal sentiment.

But, if equality of conditions gives some resources to all citizens, it prevents any one among them from having very extensive resources; this necessarily encloses desires within rather narrow limits.

Since men of genius have been glorious and powerful despite the disorder of their lives, many men imagine that, lacking genius, disorder suffices [for (ed.)] leading them to glory and to greatness.

The French Revolution in its inexhaustible fertility produced only a single Mirabeau, but today you see swarming a multitude of small disagreeable Mirabeaus who, lacking the talents of their model, succeed already too well in copying his vices (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 1–2).

So among democratic peoples, ambition is ardent and continuous, but it cannot habitually aim very high; and life ordinarily is spent there ardently coveting small objects that you see within your reach.[j]

What above all diverts men of democracies from great ambition is not the smallness of their fortune, but the violent effort that they make to improve it every day. They force their soul to use all its strength in order to do mediocre things, which cannot soon fail to limit its view and to circumscribe its power. They could be very much poorer and remain greater.

The small number of opulent citizens who are found within a democracy do not make an exception to this rule. A man who rises by degrees toward wealth and power contracts, in this long effort, habits of prudence and restraint which he cannot afterward give up. You do not gradually enlarge your soul like your house.[k]

An analogous remark is applicable to the sons of this same man. They

j. What must above all be pointed out in the chapter on ambition is not that ambition is *naturally small* or aims at first very low, but [that (ed.)] it is *easy to tire* by obstacles.

The *softness* of souls makes it so that when a goal can be obtained only with much effort and time, you give up obtaining it and limit yourself to a goal less grand but easier to attain. I have not made this idea come out enough, idea which is however capital and presents applications without number. That is how, at the moment (April 1838) when I am dealing with the army, I see clearly that in democracies the soldier would very much want to be made an officer, but for that it would be necessary to study, to impose efforts on himself, to run dangers that put him off. He prefers to await the end of his time, to return to his fields and to work very quietly toward obtaining well-being for himself.

[In the margin: Ambition is no longer *moderate* but *effeminate.*

It is not ambition which is small, it is courage./ Ambition is *vulgar* rather than *small. Vulgar,* there is the true word of the chapter.]

The officer on his part would find it excellent to have the salary, the power and the general consideration, and he sees nothing that prevents him absolutely from reaching them. But for that an energy of will, a brilliance, a splendor that costs him something would be necessary. He prefers to reach the time of his retirement far from danger and to go to live in his village without working.

This is what explains the picture of Lamoricière.

All this shows my idea with a new face that must be made into one of the principal ideas of the chapter (*Rubish,* 2).

k. On the side: "<All that is perhaps a bit high and mighty.>" The same observation is also found in the *rubish.*

are born, it is true, in a high position, but their parents were humble; they grew up amid sentiments and ideas which are difficult for them to escape later; and it is to be believed that the sons will inherit at the same time the instincts of their father and his property.

It can happen, on the contrary, that the poorest offspring of a powerful aristocracy exhibits a vast ambition, because the traditional opinions of his race and the general spirit of his caste still sustain him for some time above his fortune.

What also prevents the men of democratic times from easily devoting themselves to the ambition for great things is the time that they foresee must pass before they are able to embark upon them. "A great advantage of quality," Pascal said, "is to put a man, at eighteen or twenty years of age, in as strong a position as another man would be at fifty; this is thirty years gained without difficulty."[m] Those thirty years are usually lacking for the ambitious men of democracies. Equality, which allows each man the ability to reach everything, prevents him from growing up quickly.

In a democratic society, as elsewhere, there are only a certain number of great fortunes to make; and because the careers that lead to them are open to each citizen without distinction, the progress of all must indeed slow down. Since the candidates appear more or less the same, and since it is difficult to make a choice from among them without violating the principle of equality, which is the supreme law of democratic societies, the first idea that presents itself is to make all march with the same step and to subject them all to the same tests.

So as men become more similar and as the principle of equality penetrates institutions and mores more peacefully and profoundly, the rules for advancement become more inflexible, advancement slower; the difficulty of quickly attaining a certain degree of grandeur increases.

By hatred of privilege and by overabundance of choices, you come to the point of forcing all men, whatever their size, to pass through the same channel, and you subject them all without distinction to a multitude of small preliminary exercises, in the middle of which their youth is lost and

m. It refers to *pensée* 193 of the Lafuma edition.

their imagination grows dim; so that they despair of ever being able to enjoy fully the advantages that you offer to them; and when they are finally able to do extraordinary things, they have lost the taste for them.

In China, where equality of conditions is very great and very ancient, a man passes from one public office to another only after being subjected to a competitive examination. This test is found at each step of his career, and the idea of it has entered the mores so well that I remember reading a Chinese novel in which the hero, after many vicissitudes, finally touches the heart of his mistress by doing well on an examination. Great ambitions breathe badly in such an atmosphere.

What I say about politics extends to everything; equality produces the same effects everywhere; wherever the law does not undertake to regulate and to slow the movement of men, competition suffices.

In a well-established democratic society, great and rapid rises are therefore rare; they form exceptions to the common rule. It is their singularity that makes you forget their small number.

The men of democracies end up catching sight of all these things; in the long run they notice that the legislator opens before them a limitless field, in which everyone can easily take a few steps, but which no one can imagine crossing quickly. Between them and the vast and final object of their desires, they see a multitude of small, intermediary barriers, which they must clear slowly; this sight fatigues their ambition in advance and discourages it. So they renounce these distant and doubtful hopes, in order to seek less elevated and easier enjoyments close to them. The law does not limit their horizon, but they narrow it themselves.

I said that great ambitions were more rare in democratic centuries than in times of aristocracy;[n] I add that, when, despite natural obstacles, great ambitions are born, they have another physiognomy.

n. "<Democratic nations produce great things rather than great men>" (*Rubish,* 2).

In the *rubish* of the following chapter: "Democracy suggests a few immoderate ambitions, without check, without limit, of a boldness and an imprudence without parallel (like that of Thiers), such as you hardly ever see in aristocratic centuries; but in general it gives rise to a multitude of small, vulgar, commonplace ambitions and diminishes the number of great proportionate ambitions" (*Rubish,* 2).

In aristocracies, the course of ambition is often extensive; but its limits are fixed. In democratic countries, it moves usually in a narrow field; but if it happens to go beyond those limits, you would say that there is no longer anything that limits it. Since men there are weak, isolated and changing, and since precedents there have little sway and laws little duration, resistance to innovations is soft and the social body never seems very sound or very settled. So that, when those who are ambitious once have power in hand, they believe they are able to dare anything; and when power escapes them, they immediately think about overturning the State in order to regain it.[o]

That gives to great political ambition a violent and revolutionary character, which is rare to see, to the same degree, in aristocratic societies.

A multitude of small, very judicious ambitions, out of which now and then spring a few great, badly ordered desires: such usually is the picture presented by democratic nations. A measured, moderate and vast ambition is hardly ever found there.[p]

o. "Charles XII had a great aristocratic ambition; Napoleon, a great democratic ambition.

"Each one is vast in a way.

"[To the side] The one wanted above all to make his triumphs talked about, the other to enjoy them" (*Rubish,* 2).

In a variant of these same notes, in another place in the *rubish,* Tocqueville adds: "There was something of the *parvenu* in the ambition of Napoleon" (Rubish, 2).

p. M. Guizot, in his article on religion inserted in the *Université catholique* for the month of M[arch (ed.)] 1838 says:

"Never has ambition been more impatient and more widespread. Never have so many hearts been prey to such a thirst for all goods, for all pleasures. Arrogant pleasures and coarse pleasures, thirst for material well-being and for intellectual vanity, taste for activity and for softness, adventures and idleness: everything seems possible, and desirable, and accessible to all. It is not that passion is strong, nor man disposed to make much effort for the satisfaction of his desires. He wants feebly, but he desires immensely. . . . The world has never seen such a conflict of weak wills, of fantasies, of claims, of demands, never heard such a noise of voices being raised all together to claim as their right what they lack and what pleases them. And it is not toward God that these voices are being raised. Ambition is at the same time widespread and lower."

[On the back] *Weak wills,* this term is precious and expresses well one of my thoughts. You have an immense and weak will because everything seems open and permitted; you do not have a firm will because soon the obstacles are revealed. Ap-

I showed elsewhere by what secret strength equality made the passion for material enjoyments and the exclusive love of the present predominate in the human heart; these different instincts mingle with the sentiment of ambition and tinge it, so to speak, with their colors.

I think that the ambitious men of democracies are preoccupied less than all the others by the interests and judgments of the future; the present moment alone occupies them and absorbs them. They rapidly complete many undertakings rather than raising a few very enduring monuments; they love success much more than glory. What they ask above all from men is obedience. What they want above all is dominion. Their mores almost always remain less elevated than their condition; this means that very often they bring very vulgar tastes to an extraordinary fortune, and that they seem to have risen to sovereign power only in order to gain more easily for themselves small and coarse pleasures.

I believe that today it is very necessary to purify, to regulate and to adjust the sentiment of ambition, but that it would be very dangerous to want to impoverish it and to curb it beyond measure. You must attempt in advance to set extreme limits for it, which you will never allow it to surpass; but you must take care not to hinder its impetus too much within the allowed limits.

I admit that I fear boldness much less, for democratic societies, than mediocrity of desires; what seems to me most to fear is that, amid the small incessant occupations of private life, ambition may lose its impetus and its grandeur; that human passions may become calmer and lower at the same time, so that each day the bearing of the social body may become more tranquil and less elevated.

So I think that the heads of these new societies would be very wrong to want to put the citizens to sleep in a happiness that is too smooth and

pearance and reality are always opposite. The social state awakens ambition and puts it to sleep, gives great desires and finally leads you to be content with little.

[In the margin] Precious new deduction to include, deduction which explains very well this evident phenomenon of democracies. *Immense* ambition and *petty* rich men (*Rubish,* 2). It refers to François Guizot, "Of Religion in Modern Societies," *Université catholique* 5, no. 27 (March 1838): 231–40. The passage cited is found on p. 232.

peaceful, and that it is good that they sometimes give them difficult and perilous things to do, in order to elevate ambition there and to open a theater to it.[q]

Moralists complain constantly that the favorite vice of our period is pride.

That is true in a certain sense: there is no one, in fact, who does not believe himself worth more than his neighbor and who agrees to obey his superior. But that is very false in another sense; for this same man, who cannot bear either subordination or equality, nonetheless despises himself to the point that he believes himself made only for appreciating vulgar pleasures. He stops willingly at mediocre desires without daring to embark upon high undertakings; he scarcely imagines them.

So far from believing that humility must be recommended to our contemporaries, I would like you to try hard to give them a more vast idea of themselves and of their species;[r] humility is not healthy for them; what they lack most, in my opinion, is pride. I would willingly give up several of our small virtues for this vice.

[In a jacket with the manuscript of the chapter:

Piece of the end that I am not very sure of having correctly deleted. Have it copied and read./

I must not yet despair of combining this with the original version./

Seeing the general movement of ambition that today torments all men and the senseless passions that often agitate them, there are many men who suppose that the principal business of the legislator in democratic

q. "A word that M. Thiers said to me one day in 1837 must not be lost from view: the bourgeois do great things when they are not led in a bourgeois way" (*Rubish,* 2).

r. "The great objective of a democratic government must be to give its subjects *great reasonable* ambitions" (*Rubish,* 2).

In another place of the *rubish:* "Utility that there can be in favoring philosophical doctrines that elevate in a general manner the notion of the human species and keep the human spirit at a certain proud height, like the dogma of the immortality of the soul, of the predestination of man to a better world, of his high position in the chain of being.

Philosophical humility is worth nothing in democratic centuries" (*Rubish,* 2).

centuries is to extinguish ambition and to narrow their desires. This seems true to me only to a certain measure.

It is in fact very important in those times to give fixed and visible limits to ambition.

<I am led to believe that among democratic nations it can be useful to entrust sovereign power to only a single family in order for sovereign power not to appear each day within reach of every man.>

I think that among democratic nations more than among all others it is important carefully to contain powers, however great they may be, within known and unsurpassable limits before which immoderate imaginations stop in advance. I imagine that you must work harder than elsewhere to make the constitution of the country seem strong and unchanging [v: unassailable] and, where the law fails, to make public opinion secure enough to raise an immobile barrier against unrestrained passions.

Thus, I understand that among democratic peoples it is particularly necessary to limit great ambition, but I believe that it would be dangerous to hinder its impetus too much within the allowed limits.

I admit straight on that I fear the boldness of desires much less for future generations than the mediocrity of desires. What, according to me, is principally to fear in the coming centuries is that in the midst of the small, incessant and tumultuous occupations of life, ambition may lose its impetus and its grandeur; that human passions may become exhausted and lower and that each day the appearance of humanity may become more peaceful and less elevated.

If, therefore, the legislators of the new world want men to remain at the level attained by our fathers and to go beyond it, they must take great care not to discourage the sentiment of ambition too much.

So instead of excessively plunging citizens into the contemplation of their particular interests so that they more easily abandon the direction of the State to their leaders, it is important to tear them away from themselves often in order to occupy them with public affairs and, if possible, to substitute the love of fame and the taste for great things for the passion for well-being.

I think as well that in democratic societies you must be very careful not to imprison rare virtues too narrowly within the ordinary rules; it is good there to prepare in advance great places which, by great talents and by great

efforts, you can imagine reaching quickly and where you can imagine acting with independence.

This is what occurs naturally with liberty, and nothing shows its necessity better when conditions are equal.

Free institutions constantly force men to forget the petty affairs of individuals in order to preoccupy them with the great interests of peoples; they elevate ambition and open a theater for it.

An absolute prince who becomes established within a people among whom conditions are equal {democratic} is always obliged, in order to have his power excused, to limit himself in the choice of his agents, to subject advancement to fixed and invariable rules, to profess an exaggerated respect for equality of rights, for there is no power in the world which is able to make a democratic people bear at the same time tyranny and privilege.

A self-governing nation never allows itself to be imprisoned by such fetters, and its omnipotent will constantly creates, despite customs and laws, great quick fortunes which leave vast hopes for ambition.

So may the legislators of today seek to purify and to regulate ambition, but may they take care not to want to diminish it too much.

Ambition must be given an honest, reasonable and great end, not extinguished.

≠The more I consider what is coming in the future, the more I think that from now on the great goal of the legislator must be to regulate and to adjust ambition, rather than to diminish it.

So there is nothing that seems more appropriate to the new social state than liberties in a monarchy, an hereditary prince and great elective powers.≠]

CHAPTER 20[a]

Of Positions Becoming an Industry among Certain Democratic Nations

[I have talked about how as conditions become equal the sentiment of ambition spreads.

That is seen among all peoples whose social state is becoming democratic, but among them all ambition does not use the same means to satisfy itself.]

In the United States, as soon as a citizen has some enlightenment and some resources, he seeks to enrich himself in commerce and industry, or he buys a field covered with forest and becomes a pioneer. All that he asks of the State is not to come to disturb him in his labors and to ensure the fruit of those labors.

Among most European peoples, when a man begins to feel his strength and to expand his desires, the first idea that occurs to him is to gain a public post.[b] These different results, coming from the same cause, are worth our stopping a moment here to consider.

a. Among all democratic peoples, the number of ambitions is immense.
But among all, ambition does not take the same paths.
In America, every man seeks to raise himself by industry or commerce.
In France, as soon as [he has (ed.)] the desire to raise himself above his condition, he asks for a public post.
Princes favor this tendency, and they are wrong. For since the number of positions that they can give has a limit, and since the number of those who desire positions increases without limits, princes must necessarily soon find themselves before a people of discontented place seekers (YTC, CVf, p. 48). On the jacket of the manuscript of the chapter, you read: "10 March 1838. Baugy."

b. In a former version: "I have heard it said that in Spain as soon as a man felt himself in an analogous position, the first idea that occurred to him was to gain a public post and that, if he was not able to succeed in doing so, he remained idle" (*Rubish,* 2).

When public offices are few, badly paid, unreliable, and on the other hand, industrial careers are numerous and productive, the new and impatient desires that arise every day from equality are led from all directions toward industry and not toward administration.

But if, at the same time that ranks are becoming equal, enlightenment remains incomplete or spirits timid, or commerce and industry, hampered in their development, offer only difficult and slow means to make a fortune, citizens, losing hope of improving their lot by themselves, rush tumultuously toward the head of the State[c] and ask his help. To make themselves more comfortable at the expense of the public treasury seems to them to be, if not the only path open to them, at least, the easiest path and the one most open to all for leaving a condition that is no longer enough for them. The search for positions becomes the most popular of all industries.

It must be so, above all, in large, centralized monarchies, in which the number of paid officials is immense and the existence of the office holders is adequately secure, so that no one loses hope of obtaining a post there and of enjoying it peacefully like a patrimony.[d]

I will not say that this universal and excessive desire for public office is a great social evil; that it destroys, within each citizen, the spirit of independence and spreads throughout the entire body of the nation a venal and servile temper; that it suffocates the manly virtues; nor will I make the observation that an industry of this type creates only an unproductive activity and agitates the country without making it fruitful: all of that is easily understood.

But I want to remark that the government that favors such a tendency risks its tranquillity and puts its very life in great danger.

I know that, in a time like ours, when we see the love and respect that was formerly attached to power being gradually extinguished, it can appear necessary to those governing to bind each man more tightly by his interest, and that it seems easy to them to use his very passions to keep him in order and in silence; but it cannot be so for long, and what can appear for a certain

c. At first: ". . . toward the power of the State." In the margin: "<I do not like this word 'power,' vague and new.>"

d. In the margin, in a first draft from the *Rubish:* "Spain, great proof of this. "United States, no. A thousand channels for ambition" (*Rubish,* 2).

period as a cause of strength becomes assuredly in the long run a great cause of trouble and of weakness.

Among democratic peoples, as among all others, the number of public posts ends by having limits; but among these same peoples, the number of ambitious men has no limits; the number increases constantly, by a gradual and irresistible movement, as conditions become equal; the number reaches its limit only when men are lacking.

So when ambition has no outlet except the administration alone, the government necessarily ends by encountering a permanent opposition; for its task is to satisfy with limited means, desires that multiply without limits. You have to be well aware that, of all the peoples of this world, the one most difficult to contain and to lead is a people of place seekers. Whatever the efforts made by its leaders, they can never satisfy such a people, and you must always fear that it will finally overturn the constitution of the country and change the face of the State, solely for the need to open up positions.[e]

[<≠It is very insane to want to contain in a single streambed the always swelling torrent of human ambitions. It would be wiser in my opinion to divide up the mass and to separate it into a thousand various channels.>

I am persuaded on my part that in a democratic society the interest of

e. When a man succeeds in rising by industrial careers . . . he generally makes a thousand others and sometimes the whole nation profit from his rise. He establishes an enduring situation in the country.

When, on the contrary, a man succeeds in rising by public offices, his rise serves only himself. It does not even offer anything stable for him. It takes all independence away from him. Finally it prevents, for example, other abilities from being directed elsewhere. This state of things is very unfortunate for the government itself, considering it apart from the nation. For individual ambition in democracies has no limits, and the number of positions to give ends by having limits. When all democratic ambition concentrates on positions, a government must always expect a terrible, always permanent opposition. A people of place seekers makes revolutions in order to have vacant positions when all those that exist are already filled. *Industrial* (I am using this word lacking anything better) ambition can often come to the support of public stability. Ambition for positions in a democracy can only tend toward upheavals (*Rubish,* 2).

those governing as well as that of the governed is to multiply private careers infinitely.≠]

The princes of our times, who work hard to draw toward themselves alone all the new desires aroused by equality, and to satisfy them, will therefore finish, if I am not mistaken, by regretting being engaged in such an enterprise; they will discover one day that they have risked their power by making it so necessary, and that it would have been more honest and more sure to teach each one of their subjects the art of being self-sufficient.

CHAPTER 21[a]

Why Great Revolutions Will Become Rare[b]

a. "This chapter would take a very long time to analyze; since I lack time, I leave it." (YTC, CVf, p. 49).

On 15 May 1838 Tocqueville read this chapter to Corcelle and Ampère. The latter, noticing the influence of Rousseau and the tone of the Great Century, could not prevent himself from noting his sadness at seeing the turn that Tocqueville's thought takes here (*Correspondance avec Ampère, OC,* XI, pp. xvi–xvii).

The theory of revolutions has had little commentary to this day. See Melvin Richter, "Tocqueville's Contribution to the Theory of Revolution," in C. Friedrich, ed., *Revolution* (New York: Atherton, 1966), pp. 75–121; and Irving Zeitlin, *Liberty, Equality and Revolution in Alexis de Tocqueville* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).

b. On the jacket of the manuscript:

> OF REVOLUTIONARY PASSIONS AMONG DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES./
>
> ≠WHY THE AMERICANS SEEM SO AGITATED AND ARE SO IMMOBILE./
>
> WHY THE AMERICANS MAKE SO MANY INNOVATIONS AND SO FEW REVOLUTIONS./≠
>
> Take care while going over this chapter to point out better that I am speaking about a final and remote state and not about the times of transition in which we are still. That is necessary in order not to appear paradoxical./
>
> Baugy, end of March 1838.

At the end of the chapter in the manuscript:

> Note to leave at the head of the chapter. The spirit of the chapter must absolutely comply with it./
>
> I can say very well, without putting myself in contradiction with myself, that equality does not lead men to *great and sudden revolutions.*
>
> But I cannot say, without giving the lie to a thousand passages of this book and of the one that precedes it, that the natural tendency of equality is to make men *immobile.*
>
> Nor is that true.
>
> Equality leads man to continual *small changes* and pushes him away from *great revolutions;* there is the truth.

A people who has lived for centuries under the regime of castes and classes arrives at a democratic social state only through a long succession of more or less painful transformations, with the aid of violent efforts, and after numerous vicissitudes during which goods, opinions and power rapidly change place.

Even when this great revolution is finished, you see the revolutionary habits that it created still continue to exist, and profound agitation follows it.

Since all of this occurs at the moment when conditions are becoming equal, you conclude that a hidden connection and a secret bond exist between equality itself and revolutions, so that the one cannot exist without the others arising.

On this point, reasoning seems in agreement with experience.

Among a people where ranks are nearly equal no apparent bond unites men and holds them firmly in their place. No one among them has the permanent right or the power to command, and no one's condition is to obey; but each man, finding himself provided with some enlightenment and some resources, can choose his path and walk apart from all his fellows.

The same causes that make citizens independent of each other push them each day toward new and restless desires, and goad them constantly.

So it seems natural to believe that, in a democratic society, ideas, things and men must eternally change forms and places, and that democratic centuries will be times of rapid and constant transformations.

What is true as well is that a multitude of these small movements that are taken for progress are not.

Man goes back and forth in place.

All that I can add is that there is such a political state that, combining with equality and profiting from this fear of revolutions natural to democratic peoples, would be able to make them entirely stationary./

Hic.

In democratic societies, revolutions will be less *frequent,* less *violent* and less *sudden* than you believe.

Perhaps it can even happen that society there becomes *stationary.*

There is the clear idea that must emerge from the chapter. More would be too much; less, too little.

Is that the case in fact? Does equality of conditions lead men in a habitual and permanent way toward revolutions? Does it contain some disturbing principle that prevents society from becoming settled and disposes citizens constantly to renew their laws, their doctrines and their mores? I do not believe so. The subject is important; I beg the reader to follow me closely.[c]

Nearly all the revolutions that have changed the face of peoples have been made in order to sanction or to destroy inequality. Take away the secondary causes that have produced the great agitations of men, you will almost always arrive at inequality. It is the poor who have wanted to steal the property of the rich, or the rich who have tried to put the poor in chains. So if you can establish a state of society in which each man has something to keep and little to take, you will have done a great deal for the peace of the world.

I am not unaware that, among a great democratic people, there are always very poor citizens and very rich citizens; but the poor, instead of forming the immense majority of the nation as always happens in aristocratic societies, are small in number, and the law has not tied them together by the bonds of an irremediable and hereditary misery.

The rich, on their side, are few and powerless; they do not have privileges that attract attention; their wealth itself, no longer incorporated in and represented by the land, is elusive and as if invisible. Just as there are no longer races of the poor, there are no longer races of the rich; the latter emerge each day from within the crowd, and return to it constantly. So they do not form a separate class that you can easily define and despoil; and since, moreover, the rich are attached by a thousand secret threads to the mass of their

c. I must be very careful in all of this chapter because everything I say about the difficulty of revolutions depends prodigiously on the nature of political institutions. That will leap to the attention of the reader and he must not believe that he has discovered what I have not seen.

It is incontestable that autocracy, combining itself with equality of conditions, will make the most steady and the most somnolent of governments, but I do not know if you can say as much about equality combining with political liberty. I believe it nonetheless, everything considered and once permanent and peaceful equality has been established, but perhaps it will be necessary to make the distinction (*Rubish,* 2).

fellow citizens, the people can scarcely hope to strike them without hitting themselves. Between these two extremes of democratic societies, is found an innumerable multitude of almost similar men who, without being precisely rich or poor, possess enough property to desire order, and do not have enough property to arouse envy.

Those men are naturally enemies of violent movements; their immobility keeps at rest everything above and below them, and secures the social body in its settled position.

It isn't that those same men are satisfied with their present fortune, or that they feel a natural horror for a revolution whose spoils they would share without experiencing its evils; on the contrary, they desire to become rich with unequaled ardor; but the difficulty is to know from whom to take the wealth. The same social state that constantly suggests desires to them contains those desires within necessary limits. It gives men more liberty to change and less interest in changing.[d]

Not only do men of democracies not naturally desire revolutions, but they fear them.

There is no revolution that does not more or less threaten acquired property. Most of those who inhabit democratic countries are property owners; they not only have properties; they live in the condition in which men attach the highest value to their property.[e]

If you attentively consider each one of the classes that compose society, it is easy to see that in no class are the passions that arise from property more ruthless and more tenacious than among the middle class.

Often the poor hardly worry about what they possess, because they suffer from what they lack much more than they enjoy the little that they have. The rich have many other passions to satisfy than that of wealth, and besides, the long and difficult use of a great fortune sometimes ends by making them as if insensitive to its sweet pleasures.

But the men who live in a comfort equally removed from opulence and

d. The manuscript includes in this place the reference to note a. See note z for p. 1152.

e. "There is no country in which I saw as much horror for the theory of agrarian law than in the United States" (*Rubish,* 2).

from misery put an immense value on their property. Since they are still very close to poverty, they see its rigors close up, and fear them; between poverty and them, there is nothing except a small patrimony on which they soon fix their fears and their hopes. At every instant, they become more interested in their property because of the constant concerns that it gives them, and they become attached to it because of the daily efforts that they make to augment it. The idea of giving up the least part of it is unbearable to them, and they consider its complete loss as the greatest of misfortunes. Now, it is the number of these ardent and anxious small property owners that equality of conditions increases incessantly.

Thus, in democratic societies, the majority of citizens does not see clearly what it could gain from a revolution, and it feels at every instant and in a thousand ways what it could lose.[f]

I said, in another place in this work, how equality of conditions pushed men naturally toward industrial and commercial careers, and how it increased and diversified property in land; finally I showed how equality of conditions inspired in each man an ardent and constant desire to augment his well-being. There is nothing more contrary to revolutionary passions than all these things.

f. On a loose sheet at the end of the manuscript of the chapter:

Material bond./

I wonder how, when citizens differ in opinion on so many points as they do among most democratic peoples, it happens nonetheless that a certain material order is established easily enough among them, and I explain it to myself.

In proportion as conditions become equal, the material order becomes a positive and visible interest for more individuals at the same time. Since everyone has something to lose and since no one has much to gain from great changes, it is tacitly agreed not to change beyond a certain measure. This is how the division of property moderates the spirit of *change* to which it gave birth. On the one hand, it pushes men toward innovations of all types; on the other, it holds them within the limits of certain innovations.

In democracies the natural taste of citizens perhaps leads them to *disturb* the State, but concern for their interest prevents them from doing so. These democratic societies are always agitated, rarely overturned. In aristocracies, on the contrary, where the opinions of men are naturally more similar and conditions as well as interests more different, a small event can lead to confusion in everything.

Perhaps here what I said about personal property.

A revolution, in its final result, can happen to serve industry and commerce; but its first effect will almost always be[g] to ruin the industrialists and the merchants, because it cannot fail, first of all, to change the general state of consumption and to reverse temporarily the relation that existed between production and needs.

Moreover, I know nothing more opposed to revolutionary mores than commercial mores. Commerce is naturally hostile to all violent passions. It loves moderation, takes pleasure in compromises, very carefully flees from anger. It is patient, flexible, ingratiating, and it resorts to extreme means only when the most absolute necessity forces it to do so. Commerce makes men independent of each other; it gives them a high idea of their individual value; it leads them to want to conduct their own affairs, and teaches them to succeed in doing so; so it disposes them to liberty, but distances them from revolutions.

[≠Thus the effects of equality of conditions are diverse. Equality, making men independent of each other, puts them at full liberty to innovate and at the same time gives them tastes which need stability in order to be satisfied.≠]

In a revolution, the owners of personal property[h] have more to fear than all the others; for on the one hand, their property is often easy to seize, and

g. The manuscript says: "will be always."

h. "I said elsewhere that democracy pushed men toward commerce and industry and tended to augment personal wealth.

"Commercial habits in return are very favorable to the maintenance of democracy. Habit of repressing all too violent passions. Moderation. No anger. Compromises. Complicated and compromising interests in times of revolution.

"As for the effects of property in land, see note (m.n.o.)" (*Rubish,* 2).

Personal wealth (m.n.o.)./

How democracy tends to augment personal wealth. How it gives men a distaste for slow industries such as the cultivation of the land and pushes them toward commerce.

Political consequences of this. Idea of Damais: the man rich in capital in land risks in revolutions only his income; the man rich in personal capital risks, on the contrary, his entire existence. The one is much [more (ed.)] hostile to every appearance of trouble than the other. Many other consequences to draw from that. To look closely at this (YTC, CVa, p. 52).

on the other hand, at every moment it can disappear completely. This is less to be feared by owners of landed property who, while losing the income from their lands, hope at least throughout the vicissitudes, to keep the land itself. Consequently you see that the first are much more frightened than the second at the sight of revolutionary movements.

So peoples are less disposed to revolutions as personal property is multiplied and diversified among them and as the number of those who possess personal property becomes greater.

Moreover, whatever profession men embrace and whatever type of property they enjoy, one feature is common to all.

No one is fully satisfied with his present fortune, and everyone works hard every day, by a thousand diverse means, to augment it. Consider each one among them at whatever period of his life, and you will see him preoccupied with some new plans whose goal is to increase his comfort; do not speak to him about the interests and rights of humanity; this small domestic enterprise absorbs all of his thoughts for the moment and makes him wish to put public agitations off to another time.

That not only prevents them from making revolutions, but turns them away from wanting to do so. Violent political passions have little hold on men who have in this way attached their entire soul to the pursuit of well-being. The ardor that they give to small affairs calms them down about great ones.

It is true that from time to time in democratic societies enterprising and ambitious citizens arise whose immense desires cannot be satisfied by following the common path. These men love revolutions and call them forth; but they have great difficulty bringing them about, if extraordinary events do not come to their aid.

You do not struggle effectively against the spirit of your century and country; and one man, however powerful you suppose him to be, has difficulty getting his contemporaries to share sentiments and ideas that the whole of their desires and their sentiments reject. So once equality of conditions has become an old and uncontested fact and has stamped its character on mores, you must not believe that men easily allow themselves to rush into dangers following an imprudent leader or a bold innovator.

It is not that they resist him in an open way, with the aid of intelligent

contrivances, or even by a premeditated plan to resist. They do not fight him with energy; sometimes they even applaud him, but they do not follow him. To his ardor, they secretly oppose their inertia; to his revolutionary instincts, their conservative interests; their stay-at-home tastes to his adventurous passions; their good sense to the flights of his genius; to his poetry, their prose. With a thousand efforts, he arouses them for one moment, and soon they escape him; and as if brought down by their own weight, they fall back. He exhausts himself, wanting to animate this indifferent and inattentive crowd, and he finally sees himself reduced to impotence, not because he is vanquished, but because he is alone.

I do not claim that men who live in democratic societies are naturally immobile; I think, on the contrary, that within such a society an eternal movement reigns and that no one knows rest; but I believe that men there become agitated within certain limits beyond which they hardly ever go. They vary, alter, or renew secondary things every day; they take great care not to touch principal ones. They love change; but they fear revolutions.

Although the Americans are constantly modifying or repealing some of their laws, they are very far from exhibiting revolutionary passions. By the promptness with which they stop and calm themselves down when public agitation begins to become threatening, even at the moment when passions seem the most excited, it is easy to discover that they fear a revolution as the greatest of misfortunes, and that each one among them is inwardly resolved to make great sacrifices to avoid it. There is no country in the world where the sentiment of property shows itself more active and more anxious than in the United States, and where the majority shows less of a tendency toward doctrines that threaten to alter in any manner whatsoever the constitution of property.[j]

j. The Americans constantly change their opinions in detail, but they are more invincibly attached to certain opinions than any other people on earth. This [is (ed.)] a singularity that is very striking at first view and that can only be understood by thinking about the difficulty that men have in acting upon each other in democracies and in establishing entirely new beliefs in the minds of a great number of men.

[On the back] Great revolutions in *ideas,* very rare events under democracies. Great revolutions in *facts,* something rarer still (*Rubish,* 2).

I have often remarked that theories that are revolutionary by their nature, in that they can only be realized by a complete and sometimes sudden change in the state of property and persons, are infinitely less in favor in the United States than in the great monarchies of Europe. If a few men profess them, the mass rejects them with a kind of instinctive horror.

I am not afraid to say that most of the maxims that are customarily called democratic in France would be proscribed by the democracy of the United States. That is easily understood. In America, you have democratic ideas and passions; in Europe, we still have revolutionary passions and ideas.

If America ever experiences great revolutions, they will be brought about by the presence of Blacks on the soil of the United States: that is to say that it will be not equality of conditions, but on the contrary inequality of conditions that gives birth to them.

When conditions are equal, each man willingly becomes isolated within himself and forgets the public. If the legislators of democratic peoples did not seek to correct this fatal tendency or favored it, with the thought that this tendency diverts citizens from political passions and thus turns them away from revolutions, they could themselves end up producing the evil that they want to avoid. And a moment could arrive when the disorderly passions of a few men, making use of the unintelligent egoism and faintheartedness of the greatest number, would end up forcing the social body to undergo strange vicissitudes.

In democratic societies,[k] hardly any one other than small minorities desires revolutions; but minorities can sometimes make them.[m]

k. The manuscript says: "In democratic centuries . . ."

m. In an aristocratic country two or three powerful individuals join together and make a revolution. Among a democratic people millions of independent men must agree and associate in order to attain the same goal, which is that much more difficult since among these peoples the State is naturally more skilled and stronger and individuals more powerless and weaker than anywhere else.

Thus equality not only removes from men the taste for revolutions, to a certain point it takes the power away from them (*Rubish,* 2).

I am not saying that democratic nations are safe from revolutions; I am only saying that the social state of these nations does not lead them to, but rather distances them from revolutions. Democratic peoples, left to themselves, do not easily become engaged in great adventures; they are carried toward revolutions only unknowingly; they sometimes undergo revolutions, but they do not make them. And I add that, when they have been permitted to acquire enlightenment and experience, they do not allow them to be made.[n]

I know well that in this matter public institutions themselves can do a great deal; they favor or restrain the instincts that arise from the social state. So I am not maintaining, I repeat, that a people is safe from revolution for the sole reason that, within it, conditions are equal; but I believe that, whatever the institutions of such a people, great revolutions there will always be infinitely less violent and rarer than is supposed; and I easily foresee such a political state that, combining with equality, would make society more stationary [<and more immobile>] than it has ever been in our West.

What I have just said about facts applies in part to ideas.

Two things are astonishing in the United States: the great mobility of most human actions and the singular fixity of certain principles. Men stir constantly, the human mind seems almost immobile.

Once an opinion has spread over the American soil and taken root, you could say that no power on earth is able to eradicate it. In the United States the general doctrines in matters of religion, philosophy, morals, and even of politics, do not vary, or at least they are only modified after a hidden

A note at the end of the manuscript explains:

> There are two remarks of Édouard that I must make use of.
>
> 1. In political revolutions: in aristocracies it is the majority that has an interest in revolutions. In democracies, the minority. That is implied several times. Say it clearly.
> 2. In intellectual revolutions. All men, having a certain smattering of everything, imagine that they have nothing new to learn or to learn from anyone.

n. To the side of a first version in the rough drafts:

"Perhaps here Athens and Florence./

"In this matter I would very much like people to stop citing to us, in relation to everything, the example of the democratic republics of Greece and Italy . . ." (*Rubish,* 2).

and often imperceptible effort;[o] the crudest prejudices themselves fade only with an inconceivable slowness amid the friction repeated a thousand times between things and men.

I hear it said that it is in the nature and in the habits of democracies to change sentiments and thoughts at every moment. That is perhaps true of small democratic nations,[*] such as those of antiquity [added: or of the Middle Ages], which were gathered all together in the public square and then stirred up at the pleasure of an orator. I saw nothing similar within the great democratic people that occupies the opposite shores of our ocean. What struck me in the United States was the difficulty experienced in disabusing the majority of an idea that it has conceived and in detaching the majority from a man that it adopts. Writings or speeches can hardly succeed in doing so; experience alone achieves it in the end; sometimes experience must be repeated.[p]

This is astonishing at first view; a more attentive examination explains it.

[<≠It is ideas that, most often, produce facts, and in turn facts constantly modify ideas.≠>]

I do not believe that it is as easy as you imagine to uproot the prejudices of a democratic people; to change its beliefs; to substitute new religious, philosophical, political and moral principles for those that were once established; in a word, to make great and frequent intellectual revolutions. It

o. "In metaphysics and in morals and in religion, authority seems to me more necessary and less offensive than in politics, in science and in the arts./

"If equality of con.-.-t.-ons [conditions? (ed.)] combined with autocracy, I think that the most immobile state of things that we have seen until now in our Europe would result" (*Rubish,* 2).

[*]. Show in a note there, in two words, that these were not democracies. Idle men.

p. In the margin:

Show how what was called *democracy* in antiquity and in the Middle Ages had no real analogy with what we see in our times./

In Florence no middle class. Capitalists. Workers. No agricultural class. Manufacturing and dense population.

The same cause makes them conceive false opinions and makes them obstinately keep their false opinions. They adopt such opinions because they do not have the leisure to examine them carefully and they keep them because they do not want to take the trouble and the time to review them.

is not that the human mind is idle there; it is in constant motion; but it exerts itself to vary infinitely the consequences of known principles and to discover new consequences rather than to seek new principles. It turns back on itself with agility, rather than rushing forward by a rapid and direct effort; it extends its sphere little by little by continuous and quick small movements; it does not shift ground suddenly.

Men equal in rights, in education, in fortune, and to say everything in a phrase, of similar condition, necessarily have almost similar needs, habits and tastes. Since they see matters in the same way, their mind is inclined naturally toward analogous ideas, and although each one of them can withdraw from his contemporaries and create his own beliefs, they end up, without knowing it and without wanting to, by finding themselves all with a certain number of common opinions.

[The intellectual anarchy of democratic societies is more apparent than real. Men differ infinitely on questions of detail, but on the great principles they are in agreement.]

The more attentively I consider the effects of equality on the mind, the more I am persuaded that the intellectual anarchy of which we are witnesses is not, as some suppose, the natural state of democratic peoples.[q] I believe that the intellectual anarchy must instead be considered as

q. On a sheet at the end of the manuscript of the chapter:

I must take great care not to fall into the improbable and the paradoxical and to appear to be conjuring up ghosts.

Equality of conditions, giving individual reason a complete independence, must lead men toward intellectual anarchy and bring about continual revolutions in human opinions.

This is the first idea that presents itself, the common idea, the most likely idea at first view.

By examining things more closely, I discover that there are limits to this individual independence in democratic countries that I had not seen at first and which make me believe that beliefs must be more *common* and more *stable* than we judge at first glance.

That is already doing a great deal to lead the mind of the reader there.

But I want to aim still further and I am going even as far as imagining that the final result of democracy will be to make the human mind too immobile and human opinions too stable.

an accident particular to their youth, and that it shows itself only during the period of transition when men have already broken the old bonds that tied them together, and still differ prodigiously by origin, education and mores; so that, having retained very diverse ideas, instincts and tastes, nothing prevents them any longer from bringing them forth. The principal opinions of men become similar as conditions become alike. Such seems to me to be the general and permanent fact; the rest is fortuitous and fleeting.[r]

I believe that rarely, in a democratic society, will a man come to imagine, at a single stroke, a system of ideas very removed from the one that his contemporaries have adopted; and if such an innovator appeared, I imagine that he would at first have great difficulty making himself heard and still more making himself believed.[s]

When conditions are almost the same, one man does not easily allow himself to be persuaded by another. Since all see each other very close up, since together they have learned the same things and lead the same life, they

This idea is so extraordinary and so removed from the mind of the reader that I must make him see it only in the background and as an hypothesis.

Note in the rough drafts:

This idea that the democratic social state is anti-revolutionary so shocks accepted ideas that I must win over the mind of the reader little by little, and for that I must begin by saying that this social state is less *revolutionary* than is supposed. I begin there and by an imperceptible curve I arrive at saying that there is room to fear that it is not revolutionary enough. True idea, but which would seem paradoxical at first view.

[To the side] Finish and do not begin with intellectual revolutions. The perfection of the logical order would require beginning there, since facts arise from ideas; but if I put my fears about the stationary state after social and political revolutions, I would be thought *far-fetched* and would not be understood. After intellectual revolutions that will be understood (*Rubish,* 2).

r. "Perhaps distinguish the democratic *social state* from democratic *political institutions, equality of conditions* from *democracy* strictly speaking.

"The one leads to stability, the other to revolutions.

"[To the side] Equality of conditions with free institutions is still not a revolutionary constitution; combined with monarchy, it is the most naturally immobile of all states" (*Rubish,* 2).

s. In the margin: "Because the opinions of men are naturally similar, is it a reason for those opinions not to undergo a revolution?"

are not naturally disposed to take one among them as a guide and to follow him blindly; you hardly believe your fellow or your equal on his word.

It is not only confidence in the enlightenment of certain individuals that becomes weak among democratic nations; as I said elsewhere, the general idea of the intellectual superiority that any man can gain over all the others does not take long to grow dim.

As men become more alike, the dogma of the equality of minds insinuates itself little by little in their beliefs, and it becomes more difficult for an innovator, whoever he may be, to gain and to exercise a great power over the mind of a people. So in such societies, sudden intellectual revolutions are rare; for if you cast your eyes over the history of the world, you see that it is much less the strength of an argument than the authority of a name that has produced the great and rapid mutations of human opinions.

Note, moreover, that since the men who live in democratic societies[t] are not attached by any bond to each other, each one of them must be persuaded. While in aristocratic societies it is enough to be able to act on the mind of a few; all the others follow. If Luther had lived in a century of equality, and if he had not had lords and princes as an audience, he would perhaps have had more difficulty changing the face of Europe.

It is not that the men of democracies are naturally very convinced of the certitude of their opinions and very firm in their beliefs; they often have doubts that no one, in their view, can resolve. It sometimes happens in those times that the human mind would willingly change position; but, since nothing either pushes it strongly or directs it, it oscillates in place and does not move.[1]

t. The manuscript says: "democratic centuries."

1. *If I try to find out what state of society is most favorable to great intellectual revolutions, I find that it is found somewhere between the complete equality of all citizens and the absolute separation of classes.*

Under the regime of castes, the generations succeed each other without men changing place; some expect nothing more, others hope for nothing better. Imagination falls asleep amid this

When the confidence of a democratic people has been won, it is still a great matter to gain its attention. It is very difficult to make the men who live in democracies listen, when you are not talking to them about themselves.[u] They do not listen to the things that you say to them, because they are always very preoccupied with the things that they are doing.

There are, in fact, few idle men among democratic nations. Life there passes amid movement and noise, and men there are so occupied with acting that little time remains to them for thinking. What I want to note above all is that not only are they occupied, but they are passionate about their occupations. They are perpetually in action, and each one of their actions absorbs their soul; the heat that they bring to their affairs prevents them from catching fire about ideas.

I think that it is very difficult to excite the enthusiasm of a democratic people for any theory whatsoever that does not have a visible, direct and immediate connection to the daily conduct of life. So such a people does not easily abandon its ancient beliefs. For it is enthusiasm that hurls the human mind out of beaten paths and that creates great intellectual revolutions like great political revolutions.

Thus democratic peoples have neither the leisure nor the taste to go in search of new opinions. Even when they come to doubt those they possess, they nevertheless maintain them because it would require too much time

silence and this universal immobility, and the very idea of movement no longer occurs to the human mind.

When classes have been abolished and conditions have become almost equal, all men move constantly, but each one of them is isolated, independent and weak. This last state differs prodigiously from the first; it is, however, analogous on one point. Great revolutions of the human mind are very rare there.

But between these two extremes of the history of peoples, an intermediary age is found, a glorious and troubled period, when conditions are not so fixed that intelligence is asleep, and when conditions are unequal enough that men exercise a very great power over each other's mind, and that a few can modify the beliefs of all. That is when powerful reformers arise and when new ideas suddenly change the face of the world.

u. In the manuscript: ". . . when you are not talking to them about what has a visible and direct connection to the daily conduct of life, they ordinarily appear very distant. Their minds constantly escape you."

and investigation for them to change their opinions; they keep them, not as certain, but as established.

There are still other and more powerful reasons that are opposed to a great change taking place easily in the doctrines of a democratic people. I have already pointed it out at the beginning of this book.

If, within such a people, individual influences are weak and almost nonexistent, the power exercised by the mass on the mind of each individual is very great. I have given the reasons for it elsewhere. What I want to say at this moment is that you would be wrong to believe that this depended solely on the form of government, and that the majority there had to lose its intellectual dominion with its political power.

In aristocracies men often have a greatness and a strength that is their own. When they find themselves in contradiction with the greatest number of their fellows, they withdraw within themselves, sustain and console themselves apart. It is not the same among democratic peoples. Among them, public favor seems as necessary as the air that you breathe, and to be in disagreement with the mass is, so to speak, not to live. The mass does not need to use laws to bend those who do not think as it does. It is enough to disapprove of them. The sentiment of their isolation and of their powerlessness overwhelms them immediately and reduces them to despair.

Every time that conditions are equal, general opinion presses with an immense weight on the mind of each individual; opinion envelops, directs and oppresses it; that is due to the very constitution of the society much more than to its political laws. As all men resemble each other more, each one feels more and more weak in the face of all. Not finding anything that raises him very far above them and that distinguishes him from them, he mistrusts himself as soon as they fight him; not only does he doubt his strength, but he also comes to doubt his right, and he is very close to acknowledging that he is wrong, when the greatest number assert it. The majority does not need to constrain him; it convinces him.[v]

So in whatever way you organize the powers of a democratic society and

v. In the margin: "<The majority does not need political power to make life unbearable to the one who contradicts it.>"

balance them, it will always be very difficult to believe in what the mass rejects and to profess what it condemns.

This marvelously favors the stability of beliefs.

When an opinion has taken root among a democratic people and has become established in the mind of the greatest number, it then subsists by itself and perpetuates itself without effort, because no one attacks it. Those who had at first rejected it as false end by receiving it as general, and those who continue to combat it at the bottom of their hearts reveal nothing; they are very careful not to become engaged in a dangerous and useless struggle.

It is true that, when the majority of a democratic people changes opinion, it can at will bring about strange and sudden revolutions in the intellectual world; but it is very difficult for its opinion to change, and almost as difficult to notice that it has changed.

It sometimes happens that time, events or the individual and solitary effort of minds, end by shaking or by destroying a belief little by little without anything being outwardly visible. It is not fought openly. Men do not gather together to make war on it. Its partisans leave it quietly one by one; but each day a few abandon it, until finally it is shared only by a small number.

In this state, it still reigns.

Since its enemies continue to be silent, or communicate their thoughts only surreptitiously, they themselves are for a long time unable to be sure that a great revolution has taken place, and in doubt they remain immobile. They observe and they are silent. [<They still tremble before the power that no longer exists and yield in a cowardly way to an imaginary authority.>] The majority no longer believes; but it still has the appearance of believing, and this empty phantom of public opinion is enough to chill innovators and to keep them in silence and respect.

[≠That is seen in all centuries but particularly in democratic centuries.

Take liberty of the press away from a democratic nation and the human mind falls asleep.≠]

We live in a period that has seen the most rapid changes take place in the mind of men. It could happen, however, that soon the principal human

opinions will be more stable than they have been in the preceding centuries of our history; this time has not come, but perhaps it is approaching.

As I examine more closely the natural needs and instincts of democratic peoples, I am persuaded that, if equality is ever established in a general and permanent way in the world, great intellectual and political revolutions will become very difficult and rarer than we suppose.[w]

Because the men of democracies appear always excited, uncertain, breathless, ready to change will and place, [<thoughts, careers]> you imagine that they are suddenly going to abolish their laws, to adopt new beliefs and to take up new mores. You do not consider that, if equality leads men to change, it suggests to them interests and tastes that need stability in order to be satisfied; it pushes them and, at the same time, stops them; it spurs them on and ties them to the earth; it inflames their desires and limits their strength.

This is what is not revealed at first. The passions that push citizens away from each other in a democracy appear by themselves. But you do not notice at first glance the hidden force that holds them back and gathers them together.

Will I dare to say it amid the ruins that surround me? What I dread most for the generations to come is not revolutions.[x]

If citizens continue to enclose themselves more and more narrowly within the circle of small domestic interests and to be agitated there without respite, you can fear that they will end by becoming as if impervious to these great and powerful public emotions that disturb peoples, but which develop and renew them. When I see property become so mobile, and the love of property so anxious and so ardent, I cannot prevent myself from fearing that men will reach the point of regarding every new theory as a danger, every innovation as an unfortunate trouble, every social progress as a first step toward a revolution, and that they will refuse entirely to move

w. "I understand by great revolutions changes that profoundly modify the social state, the political constitution, the mores, the opinions of a people" (*Rubish,* 2).

x. "Will I dare to say it? What I dread most for the generations to come is not great revolutions, but apathy" (*Rubish,* 2).

for fear that they would be carried away. I tremble, I confess, that they will finally allow themselves to be possessed so well by a cowardly love of present enjoyments, that the interest in their own future and that of their descendants will disappear, and that they will prefer to follow feebly the course of their destiny, than to make, if needed, a sudden and energetic effort to redress it.

You believe that the new societies are going to change face every day, and as for me, I fear that they will end by being too invariably fixed in the same institutions, the same prejudices, the same mores; so that humanity comes to a stop and becomes limited; that the mind eternally turns back on itself without producing new ideas; that man becomes exhausted in small solitary and sterile movements, and that, even while constantly moving, humanity no longer advances.

[At the end of the manuscript of this chapter:

This piece interrupted the natural course of ideas. Put it in a note.[y]

<It is not only the results of revolutions that frighten democratic peoples. The extreme violence of revolutionary methods is repugnant to them.>[*]

I showed how equality of conditions, by making men alike, interested them mutually in their miseries and made their mores milder.

These habits of private life are found again in public life and prevent political passions [v: hatreds] from being too cruel and too implacable.

Here you must not confuse revolutions that are made to establish equal-

y. In the margin: "<Where to place this idea which is necessary, but which can only be introduced with difficulty into an argument without interrupting it?

"R: In a note.

"Democracy not only distances men from revolutions by their interests but also by their tastes.>" The indications in the manuscript show that this piece should have been placed immediately before "I am not unaware . . ."

[*]. Is that true in a general way? What is more favorable to revolutionary methods than this maxim that the individual is nothing, society everything? What social state better permits giving yourself to those methods and applying them than the one in which the individual is in fact so weak that you can crush him with impunity?

ity with those that take place after equality is established, and you must be very careful about applying to the second the character of the first.

Revolutions that are made to establish equality are almost always cruel because the struggle takes place between men who are already equal enough to be able to make war on each other and who are dissimilar enough to strike each other without pity.[z]

This harshness of sentiments no longer exists from the moment when citizens have become equal and alike. Among a democratic people the general and permanent mildness of mores imposes a certain restraint on the most intense political hatreds. Men willingly allow a revolution to go as far as injustice, but not as far as cruelty. The confiscation of property is repugnant to them, the sight of human blood is offensive to them; they allow you to oppress, but they do not want you to kill.

This softening of political passions is seen clearly in the United States. America is, I believe, the only country in the world where for the last fifty years not a single man has been condemned to death for a political offense. There have, nonetheless, been a few great political crimes; there has been no scaffold. It is true that several times in the United States and above all in more recent times, you have seen the population give itself to horrible excesses against Blacks and concerning slavery. But even that proves what I am asserting. The political passions of the Americans become barbaric only when an aristocratic institution is found (this is good but has already been said previously).]

z. In the margin:

<What makes democratic revolutions milder is that the interests that they engage are or seem less great. Men are always cruel when their passions are violently excited by a great interest. This could be of use to me as a transition.>

(a) The same reason that causes men to have less interest in making great revolutions in democratic centuries than in others makes revolutions there milder and less complete. For what contributes most to inflame passions and to push them toward violence is the greatness of the goal that they pursue.

There is still another reason. I showed . . . [interrupted text (ed.)]"

CHAPTER 22[a]

Why Democratic Peoples Naturally Desire Peace and Democratic Armies Naturally Desire War

The same interests, the same fears, the same passions that divert democratic peoples from revolutions distance them from war; the military spirit and the revolutionary spirit grow weaker at the same time and for the same reasons.[b]

a. "What I said in the preceding chapter explains why democratic peoples naturally love peace.

"Democratic armies naturally love war, because in these armies ambition is much more general and more (illegible word) than in all others, and because in times of peace advancement is more difficult.

"These opposite dispositions of the people and of the army make democratic societies run great dangers.

"Remedies indicated for averting these dangers" (YTC, CVf, p. 49).

In the *Rubish,* all the manuscripts belonging to the chapters on war are gathered in the same jacket with the title: INFLUENCE OF EQUALITY ON WARRIOR PASSIONS. Initially the titles of the chapters were the following:

MILITARY SPIRIT. [Chapter 22]

HOW A DEMOCRATIC ARMY COULD CEASE TO BE WARLIKE AND REMAIN TURBULENT. [This section constitutes the current chapter 22.]

WHICH CLASS IN THE DEMOCRATIC ARMY IS THE MOST NATURALLY WARLIKE AND REVOLUTIONARY. [Chapter 23]

RUBISH OF CHAPTER 4. [Chapter 24]

INFLUENCE OF EQUALITY ON MILITARY DISCIPLINE. [Chapter 25]

RUBISH OF CHAPTER 6. [Chapter 26]

Tocqueville finished drafting these chapters at the end of the month of April 1838.

"The objection which presents itself to all these chapters is that I do not have a sufficient *personal* knowledge of the matter" (*Rubish,* 2).

b. At this place you find in the manuscript a reference to note (a). In the *rubish,* a

The ever-increasing number of property owners friendly to peace, the development of personal wealth, which war so rapidly devours, this leniency of morals, this softness of heart, this predisposition toward pity that equality inspires, this coldness of reason that makes men hardly sensitive to the poetic and violent emotions which arise among arms, all these causes join together to extinguish military spirit.

I believe that you can accept as a general and constant rule that, among civilized peoples, warrior passions will become rarer and less intense, as conditions will be more equal.

War, however, is an accident to which all peoples are subject, democratic peoples as well as others. Whatever taste these nations have for peace, they must clearly keep themselves ready to repulse war, or in other words, they must have an army.

Fortune, which has done such distinctive things to favor the inhabitants of the United States, placed them in the middle of a wilderness where they have, so to speak, no neighbors. A few thousand soldiers are sufficient for them, but this is American and not democratic.

Equality of conditions, and the mores as well as the institutions that derive from it, do not release a democratic people from the obligation to maintain armies, and its armies always exercise a very great influence on its fate. So it is singularly important to inquire what the natural instincts are of those who compose its armies.

Among aristocratic peoples, among those above all in which birth alone determines rank, inequality is found in the army as in the nation; the officer is the noble, the soldier is the serf. The one is necessarily called to command, the other to obey. So in aristocratic armies, the ambition of the soldier has very narrow limits.

jacket bears the notation "Piece that originally was inserted at sign (a) and that must not be definitively deleted except after consultation.

"To have copied after reestablishing page 2, which I took out for another use." This jacket contains ideas that already appear in the chapter. A copy, reproduced in YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 89–91, bears this commentary: "Piece copied separately; I must pay attention to it at the final examination./

"Piece that originally began the chapter. I removed it as extending and reproducing ideas if not entirely similar, at least very analogous to those contained in the preceding chapter. To see again" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 89).

Nor is that of the officers unlimited.

An aristocratic body is not only part of a hierarchy; it always contains an internal hierarchy; the members who compose it are placed some above the others, in a certain way that does not vary. This one is naturally called by birth to command a regiment, and that one a company; having reached the extreme limits of their hopes, they stop on their own and remain satisfied with their lot.

There is first of all one great cause that in aristocracies tempers the desire of the officer for advancement.

Among aristocratic peoples, the officer, apart from his rank in the army, still occupies an elevated rank in society; the first is almost always in his eyes only an accessory to the second; the noble, by embracing the career of arms, obeys ambition less than a sort of duty that his birth imposes on him. He enters the army in order to employ honorably the idle years of his youth, and in order to be able to bring back to his household and to his peers a few honorable memories of military life; but his principal objective there is not to gain property, consideration and power; for he possesses these advantages on his own and enjoys them without leaving home.

In democratic armies, all the soldiers can become officers, which generalizes the desire for advancement and extends the limits of military ambition almost infinitely.

On his side, the officer sees nothing that naturally and inevitably stops him at one rank rather than at another, and each rank has an immense value in his eyes, because his rank in society depends almost always on his rank in the army.

Among democratic peoples, it often happens that the officer has no property except his pay, and can expect consideration only from his military honors. So every time he changes offices, he changes fortune and is in a way another man. What was incidental to existence in aristocratic armies has thus become the main thing, everything, existence itself.

Under the old French monarchy,[c] officers were given only their title of

c. Under the old regime and still currently in England generals were called by their

nobility. Today, they are given only their military title. This small change in the conventions of language is sufficient to indicate that a great revolution has taken place in the constitution of society and in that of the army.

Within democratic armies, the desire to advance is almost universal; it is ardent, tenacious, continual; it increases with all the other desires, and is extinguished only with life. Now, it is easy to see that, of all the armies of the world, those in which advancement must be slowest in time of peace are democratic armies. Since the number of ranks is naturally limited, the number of competitors almost innumerable, and the inflexible law of equality bears on all, no one can make rapid progress, and many cannot budge. Thus the need to advance is greater, and the ease of advancing less than elsewhere.[d]

title of nobility. In France they are given only their military title. There is a great political revolution mixed with this revolution in the conventions of language.

They count on their salary to live, on their military cross, on their ranks to appear, shine . . . , even more, all can equally attain everything. When a great prince said to young soldiers that the baton of Maréchal de France could be found in the knapsack of each one of them, he was only translating into an energetic and original form the common thought (*Rubish,* 2).

d. Democratic army./

L[ouis (ed.)]. said to me today (17 March 1837) about the army of Africa some damning things if they are true, which I still doubt to the extent that he said.

He told me that this army was not very warlike, that you had all the difficulty in the world making it fight, that the soldier thought only about finishing his time and returning to France, the officer thought only about reaching with the least danger possible the time of his retirement, that the softness there was surprising, that the regiments arrived in Africa only grudgingly, that there they took part in expeditions only grudgingly and that in the expeditions they exposed themselves as little as they could.

He claims that the army presented the same spectacle at Anvers, and he adds that if we enter into war with Europe we will without fail be defeated.

[In the margin: L[ouis (ed.)]. fell into agreement that nothing similar was seen before 1830.]

It seems to me that I am able to conclude from all that he said that the principal causes of this state of things could be reduced to this:

1. Disorganization caused by the Revolution of 1830. A great number of good subjects dismissed or retiring.

All of the ambitious men contained in a democratic army therefore wish vehemently for war, because war empties places and finally allows violation of the right of seniority, which is the only privilege natural to democracy.

We thus arrive at this singular consequence that, of all armies, the ones that most ardently desire war are democratic armies, and that, among peoples, those who most love peace are democratic peoples; and what really makes the thing extraordinary is that it is equality which produces these opposite effects simultaneously.

Citizens, being equal, conceive daily the desire and discover the possibility of changing their condition and of increasing their well-being; that disposes them to love peace, which makes industry prosper and allows each

2. Moral effect caused by this revolution. The soldier not only inferior to the civilian, which must be so, but beaten by the civilian who has suddenly become a better soldier than he is.

3. Old remnants of the Empire with which the regiments were inundated. Old non-commissioned officers who have been made officers. Four hundred battalions created and disbanded almost immediately, forming afterward an immense mass of officers which stops advancement. Almost all the lower ranks occupied by old men. In a word, the disorder of a great revolution without the movement and the impetus that it causes. It has been disorganizing without creating anything.

4. General deterioration of morals resulting from the deceptions that followed 1830, of the baseness of the government, of tricks, of the cult of cleverness. . . . This deterioration makes itself felt in the army as elsewhere. *Civilians* sell their conscience and *military men* seek to save their skin.

5. The inferior condition in which the army is found. The officer is paid little; he is taken from the secondary classes and not mixed with the upper classes; he is not received in society; he is inferior in education and in enlightenment. The civilization of the army is very inferior to that of the country. The officer is abased in all ways in his own eyes and becomes a stranger to the great sentiments and to the great thoughts that cause great things. This inferiority of the army has increased since 1830 when the aristocratic element of the army disappeared.

The first four causes that I have just talked about are accidental and transitory, but it is not sure that the fifth is not due profoundly to the state of a democratic army in peace, and it necessitates attracting my most serious attention (In the *Rubish* HOW A DEMOCRATIC ARMY COULD CEASE TO BE WARLIKE AND REMAIN TURBULENT). Certain ideas of these chapters are already found in a letter of 10 November 1836 to Kergorlay (*Correspondance avec Kergorlay, OC,* XIII, 1, pp. 416–17).

man to push his small enterprises tranquilly to their end; and from the other side, this same equality, by augmenting the value of military honors in the eyes of those who follow the career of arms, and by making honors accessible to all, makes soldiers dream of battlefields. From both sides, the restlessness of heart is the same, the taste for enjoyments is as insatiable, ambition is equal; only the means to satisfy it is different.

These opposing predispositions of the nation and of the army make democratic societies run great dangers.

When the military spirit deserts a people, the military career immediately ceases to be honored, and men of war fall to the lowest rank of public officials. They are little esteemed and no longer understood. Then the opposite of what is seen in aristocratic centuries happens. It is no longer the principal citizens who enter the army, but the least. Men give themselves to military ambition only when no other is allowed. This forms a vicious circle from which it is difficult to escape. The elite of the nation avoids the military career, because this career is not honored; and it is not honored, because the elite of the nation no longer enters it.

[≠Although the military man has in general a better-regulated and milder existence in democratic times than in all the others, he nonetheless experiences an unbearable uneasiness there; his body is better nourished, better clothed, but his soul suffers.≠]

So you must not be astonished if democratic armies often appear restless, muttering, and poorly satisfied with their lot, even though the physical condition there is usually very much milder and discipline less rigid than in all the others. The soldier feels himself in an inferior position, and his wounded pride ends by giving him the taste for war, which makes him necessary, or the love of revolutions, during which he hopes to conquer, weapons in hand, the political influence and the individual consideration that others deny him.

The composition of democratic armies makes this last danger very much to be feared.

In democratic society, nearly all citizens have some property to preserve; but democratic armies are led, in general, by proletarians. Most among them have little to lose in civil disturbances. The mass of the nation nat-

urally fears revolutions more than in centuries of aristocracy; but the leaders of the army fear them much less.

Moreover, since among democratic peoples, as I have said before, the wealthiest, most educated, most capable citizens hardly enter the military career, it happens that the army, as a whole, ends up becoming a small nation apart, in which intelligence is less widespread and habits are cruder than in the large nation. Now, this small uncivilized nation possesses the weapons, and it alone knows how to use them.

What, in fact, increases the danger that the military and turbulent spirit of the army presents to democratic peoples is the pacific temperament of the citizens; there is nothing so dangerous as an army within a nation that is not warlike; the excessive love of all the citizens for tranquillity daily puts the constitution at the mercy of soldiers.

So you can say in a general way that, if democratic peoples are naturally led toward peace by their interests and their instincts, they are constantly drawn toward war and revolutions by their armies.

Military revolutions, which are almost never to be feared in aristocracies, are always to be feared in democratic nations. These dangers must be ranked among the most formidable of all those that their future holds; the attention of statesmen [v: of good citizens] must be applied unrelentingly to finding a remedy for them.

When a nation feels itself tormented internally by the restless ambition of its army, the first thought that presents itself is to give war as a goal for this troublesome ambition.

I do not want to speak ill of war; war almost always enlarges the thought of a people and elevates the heart. There are cases where it alone can arrest the excessive development of certain tendencies that arise naturally from equality, and where war must be considered as necessary for certain inveterate illnesses[e] to which democratic societies are subject.

e. In the manuscript: ". . . as a necessary remedy for certain moral illnesses . . ."

War has great advantages; but it must not be imagined that war decreases the danger that has just been indicated. It only defers it, and it comes back more terrible after the war, for the army bears peace much more impatiently after having tasted war. War would only be a remedy for a [democratic] people who always wanted glory.

[Napoleon often let it be understood that he would have willingly stopped in the middle of his triumphs if the passions of his soldiers had not, so to speak, compelled him to throw himself constantly into new endeavors.][f]

I foresee that all the warrior princes who arise within great democratic nations will find that it is much easier for them to conquer with their army than to make the army live in peace after the victory. There are two things that a democratic people will always have a great deal of difficulty doing: beginning a war and ending it.[g]

If, moreover, war has particular advantages for democratic peoples, on the other hand it makes them run certain dangers that aristocracies do not have to fear to the same degree. I will cite only two of them.

If war satisfies the army, it hinders and often drives to despair that innumerable crowd of citizens whose small passions daily need peace to be satisfied. So it risks bringing about in another form the disorder that it should prevent.

There is no long war that, in a democratic country, does not put liberty at great risk. It is not that you must fear precisely to see, after each victory, conquering generals seize sovereign power by force, in the manner of Sylla or of Caesar.[h] The danger is of another kind. War does not always deliver democratic peoples to military government; but it cannot fail to increase immensely, among these peoples, the attributions of the civil government;

f. "<That was not due to a particular disposition of his soldiers, but to the very constitution of his army.>/

"<Such an idea never occurred to the mind of Frederick II or that of Louis XIV>" (*Rubish,* 2).

g. "When a democracy makes war, it must do it admirably, because the entire desire of amelioration that torments all individuals turns toward ranks, salaries, glory. War is then nourished by all the possible industries that it destroys" (*Rubish,* 2).

h. In a first version of the *rubish,* he adds: "or of Bonaparte" (*Rubish,* 2).

it almost inevitably centralizes in the government's hands the direction of all men and the use of everything. If it does not lead suddenly to despotism by violence, it goes there softly by habits.[j]

j. War bringing about and cementing the union of the clerk and the soldier./
It is by this path that I must arrive at this idea:
At first paint administrative tyranny preparing and establishing itself under the government whose general forms are liberal.
Then an accident, among others, war, giving the opportunity to concentrate the higher powers and leading to the union cited above.
[To the side: Military monarchy becomes established in this way, not by brutal, violent, irregular military power, but on the contrary, by regular, plain, clear, absolute military power, society having become an army, and the military before all the others, not as a *warrior,* but as master and *administrator.* The warrior will always be at the second rank in democratic societies, *capital idea.*]
That will be striking, because the danger is not imaginary.
Reread the chapter on the military spirit at that point.
10 April 1838 (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 10–11).

In another draft:

War unites many wills in the same end; it suggests very energetic and very noble passions; it creates enthusiasm, elevates the soul, suggests devotion. In these regards war gets into the health of a democratic people, which without war could collapse indefinitely.

But to make war, a very energetic and almost tyrannical central power must be created; it must be allowed many arbitrary or violent acts. The result of war can put in the hands of this power the liberty of the nation, always badly guaranteed in democracies, above all in emerging democracies.

War, which can be good from time to time when a people is strongly and long organized democratically, must therefore be avoided with great care during the entire period of transition.

M. Thiers told me one day last year (1836): "War will show the weakness of democratic governments; it will cover them with confusion and will force peoples, out of the sentiment of their preservation, to put their affairs back into a few hands. War cannot fail to make understood the insufficiency of the government of journalists and of lawyers," he added.

M. L'Ad., one of the ardent and unintelligent partisans of M. Thiers, said the other day (18 April) in front of me that representative government was a sad thing; that liberty of the press notably would be incompatible with our security, if we were at war, and that at the first general war it would have to be suppressed.

All that shows why those who aim for despotism must desire war and why in fact they desire it and push for it (YTC, CVd, pp. 14–15).

All those who seek to destroy liberty within a democratic nation should know that the surest and shortest means to succeed in doing so is war. That is the first axiom of the science.

A remedy seems to offer itself when the ambition of officers and of soldiers comes to be feared; it is to increase the number of places available, by augmenting the army. This relieves the present evil, but mortgages the future even more.

To augment the army can produce a lasting effect in an aristocratic society, because in these societies military ambition is limited to a single type of men, and stops, for each man, at a certain limit; so that you can manage to satisfy almost all of those who feel military ambition.

But among a democratic people, nothing is gained by increasing the army, because the number of ambitious men always increases in exactly the same proportion as the army itself. Those whose wishes you have fulfilled by creating new posts are immediately replaced by a new crowd that you cannot satisfy, and the first soon begin to complain again; for the same agitation of spirit that reigns among the citizens of a democracy shows itself in the army;[k] what men want there is not to gain a certain rank, but always to advance. If the desires are not very vast, they are reborn constantly. So a democratic people that augments its army only softens, for a moment,

In the same notebook you find, a bit before, this other note on the same subject:

> There are two ways to arrive at despotism by liberty:
> Two systems:
> Local liberties--------no great liberty.
> Great liberty---------no local liberties.
> D'Argenson----------Thiers.
> I want to say it not for the instruction of governments, which have nothing to learn in this matter, but for that of peoples (YTC, CVd, pp. 48–49).

Tocqueville is referring very probably to the ideas on decentralization set forth by Argenson in *Considérations sur le gouvernement ancien et présent de la France* (Amsterdam, 1784), in particular chapters 6, 7, and 8.

k. In the margin: "<When I see a democratic people, out of fear of men of war, augment the number of places in the army, I cannot prevent myself from thinking of the Romans of the decadence who bought peace with the barbarians and soon found them again the following year more enterprising and more numerous.>"

the ambition of men of war; but soon it becomes more formidable, because those who feel it are more numerous.[m]

I think, for my part, that a restless and turbulent spirit is an evil inherent in the very constitution of democratic armies, and that we must give up on curing it. The legislators of democracies must not imagine finding a military organization that by itself has the strength to calm and to contain men of war; they would exhaust themselves in vain efforts before attaining it.

It is not in the army that you can find the remedy for the vices of the army, but in the country.

Democratic peoples naturally fear trouble and despotism. It is only a matter of making these instincts into thoughtful, intelligent and stable tastes. When citizens have finally learned to make peaceful and useful use of liberty and have felt its benefits; when they have contracted a manly love of order and have voluntarily yielded to the established rule, these same citizens, while entering into the career of arms, bring these habits and these mores to the army without knowing it and as if despite themselves. The general spirit of the nation, penetrating the particular spirit of the army, tempers the opinions and the desires that arise from the military state, or by the omnipotent force of public opinion, it suppresses them. Have enlightened, well-ordered, steady and free citizens, and you will have disciplined and obedient soldiers.

Every law that, while repressing the turbulent spirit of the army, would tend to diminish, within the nation, the spirit of civil liberty and to obscure

m. The more I reflect on this the more I think that it is by armies that democracies will perish, that that is the great danger of modern times, the chance for *democratic* despotism for the future. Difficulty of cutting down on a democratic army when it exists. Difficulty of not having an army when the neighbors have one. Near impossibility of not being dragged into war or into seditions if armed.

To work on this fact. There are great truths there to put into relief./
29 September 1836.

You find on the same page this other note, which seems to be later: "Periods of transition. Ease of pushing democratic peoples toward war, of seizing power by arms. Danger to which you must always have your eyes open. Thiers" (*Rubish,* 2).

the idea of law and of rights would therefore go against its purpose. It would favor the establishment of a military tyranny much more than it would harm it.

After all, and no matter what you do, a great army within a democratic people will always be a great danger; and the most effective means of decreasing this danger will be to reduce the army; but it is a remedy that not all peoples are able to use.[n]

n. On a page of the manuscript, next to a variant of the paragraphs that finish the chapter: "Two things to do:

"1. Make the men who enter the army be penetrated by the advantages of order and of liberty.

"2. Give to the citizens a moral or material power that allows them to contain the soldiers as needed."

CHAPTER 23[a]

Which Class, in Democratic Armies, Is the Most Warlike and the Most Revolutionary

It is the essence of a democratic army to be very numerous, relative to the people who furnish it; I will talk about the reasons further along.

On the other hand, the men who live in democratic times scarcely ever choose the military career.

So democratic peoples are soon led to renounce voluntary recruitment in order to resort to compulsory enlistment.[b] The necessity of their condition obliges them to take this last measure, and you can easily predict that all will adopt it.

Since military service is compulsory, the burden is shared indiscriminately and equally by all citizens. That again follows necessarily from the condition of these peoples and from their ideas. The government can more or less do what it wants provided that it addresses itself to everyone at the

a. In democratic armies, soldiers, having to spend only a little time in the service, and being drawn to it in spite of themselves, never completely take on the spirit of the army. These are the ones who remain citizens the most. The officers on the contrary, since they are someone in society only because of their military rank, become entirely attached to the army and can become like strangers to the country. Their turbulent spirit is often weakened, however, by the stability and the sweet pleasures of the situation already acquired.

These reasons are not found to temper the restless ambition of the noncommissioned officers. The latter form the really military and revolutionary element of democratic armies (YTC, CVf, pp. 49–50).

b. "The natural tendency of a democratic people is to have an army of mercenaries" (*Rubish,* 2).

same time; it is the inequality of the burden and not the burden itself that ordinarily makes you resist.

Now, since military service is common to all citizens, the clear result is that each of them remains in the service only a few years.

Thus in the nature of things the soldier is in the army only in passing, while among most aristocratic nations, the military state is a profession that the soldier takes or that is imposed on him for life.

This has great consequences. Among the soldiers who make up a democratic army, some become attached to military life; but the greatest number, brought in spite of themselves into the service and always ready to return to their homes, do not consider themselves seriously engaged in the military career and think only about getting out of it. The latter do not contract the needs and only half-share the passions that arise from this career. They comply with their military duties, but their soul remains attached to the interests and the desires that occupied it in civilian life. So they do not take on the spirit of the army; instead they bring into the army the spirit of the society and preserve it there. Among democratic peoples, it is the simple soldiers who most remain citizens; national habits retain the greatest hold and public opinion the most power over them. It is through the soldiers above all that you can hope to make the love of liberty and respect for rights, which you knew how to inspire among the people themselves, penetrate into a democratic army. The opposite happens among aristocratic nations, in which the soldiers end up having nothing at all in common with their fellow citizens, living among them like strangers and often like enemies.

In aristocratic armies, the conservative element is the officer, because the officer alone has kept close ties to civilian society and never gives up the will to resume sooner or later his position there; in democratic armies, it is the soldier and for entirely similar reasons.

It often happens, on the contrary, that in these same democratic armies, the officer contracts tastes and desires entirely separate from those of the nation. That is understandable.

Among democratic peoples, the man who becomes an officer breaks all

the ties that attached him to civilian life; he emerges from it forever and he has no interest in returning to it. His true country is the army, since he is nothing except by the rank that he occupies there; so he follows the fortune of the army, grows or declines with it, and it is toward the army alone that from now on he directs his hopes. Since the officer has needs very distinct from those of the country, it can happen that he ardently desires war or works for a revolution at the very moment when the nation aspires most to stability and peace.

Nonetheless there are causes that temper the warrior and restless temperament in him. If ambition is universal and continuous among democratic peoples, we have seen that it is rarely great there. The man who, coming out of the secondary classes of the nation, has arrived, through the lower ranks of the army, at the rank of officer, has already taken an immense step. He has entered into a sphere superior to the one he occupied within civilian society, and he has acquired rights there that most democratic nations will always consider as inalienable.[1] He stops willingly after this great effort, and thinks about enjoying his conquest. The fear of compromising what he possesses already softens in his heart the desire to acquire what he does not have. After having overcome the first and the greatest obstacle that stopped his progress, he resigns himself with less impatience to the slowness of his march. This cooling of ambition increases as, rising higher in rank, he finds more to lose from risks. If I am not mistaken, the least warlike as well as the least revolutionary part of a democratic army will always be the head.

What I have just said about the officer and the soldier is not applicable to a numerous class that, in all armies, occupies the intermediary place between them; I mean the non-commissioned officers.

This class of non-commissioned officers, which before the present century had not yet appeared in history, is henceforth called, I think, to play a role.

Just like the officer, the non-commissioned officer has broken in his thought all the ties that attached him to civilian society; just like him, he

1. *The position of the officer is, in fact, much more secure among democratic peoples than among the others.*[c] *The less the officer is worth by himself, the more valuable rank is comparatively, and the more the legislator finds it just and necessary to assure its enjoyment.*

c. The manuscript says: ". . . than within aristocracies."

has made the military life his career and, more than the officer perhaps, he has turned all of his desires solely in this direction; but unlike the officer he has not yet reached an elevated and solid place where it is permissible for him to stop and to breathe comfortably, while waiting to be able to climb higher.

By the very nature of his functions that cannot change, the non-commissioned officer is condemned to lead an obscure, narrow, uneasy and precarious existence. So far he sees only the perils of the military life. He knows only privations and obedience, more difficult to bear than the perils. He suffers all the more from his present miseries, because he knows that the constitution of society and that of the army allow him to free himself from these miseries; from one day to the next, in fact, he can become an officer. Then he commands, has honors, independence, rights, enjoyments; not only does this object of his hopes seem immense to him, but before grasping it, he is never sure of attaining it. There is nothing irrevocable about his rank; he is left each day entirely to the arbitrariness of his leaders; the needs of discipline require imperatively that it be so. A slight fault, a caprice, can always make him lose, in a moment, the fruit of several years of work and efforts. Until he has reached the rank he covets, he has therefore done nothing.[d] Only then does he seem to enter into the career. With a man thus incited constantly by his youth, his needs, his passions, the spirit of his times, his hopes and his fears, a desperate ambition cannot fail to catch fire.

So the non-commissioned officer wants war, he wants it always and at any price, and if you refuse him war, he desires revolutions which suspend the authority of the rules; in the midst of these revolutions he hopes, by means of confusion and political passions, to expel his officer and take his place; and it is not impossible for him to bring about revolutions, because he exercises a great influence over the soldiers by shared origins and habits, even though he differs greatly from them by passions and desires.

You would be wrong to believe that these various predispositions of the

d. The manuscript of the chapter ends here. In the margin, with a bracket that goes from the beginning of the paragraph to this place: "All of this is the weak part of the piece. Developed and yet incomplete."

officer, of the non-commissioned officer and of the soldier depend on a time or a country. They will appear in all periods and among all democratic nations.

In every democratic army, it will always be the non-commissioned officer who will least represent the pacific and regular spirit of the country, and the soldier who will best represent it. The soldier will bring to the military career the strength or the weakness of national mores; there he will manifest the faithful image of the nation. If the nation is ignorant and weak, he will allow himself to be carried away to disorder by his leaders, without his knowing or despite himself. If the nation is enlightened and energetic, he will keep them in order himself.

CHAPTER 24[a]

What Makes Democratic Armies Weaker Than Other Armies While Beginning a Military Campaign and More Formidable When the War Is Prolonged[b]

a. 1. A democratic army is more unsuited than another to war after a long peace.

1. Because all the officers in all the ranks are old there.

2. Because they have allowed themselves to be penetrated by the malaise of the national mores.

3. Because they have fallen morally below the level of the people.

2. A democratic army is more formidable than another after a long war.

1. Because, since competition is immense and since the war pushes each man forcibly into his place, you always end by discovering great men of war.

2. Because war, having destroyed all the peaceful industries, becomes the sole industry, so that toward it alone are turned all the ambitious and restless desires that arise from equality.

Of military discipline in democratic armies (YTC, CVf, pp. 50–51).

Former titles of the chapter in the manuscript: "≠WHY A DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE RISKS MORE THAN ANOTHER TO BE CONQUERED DURING THE FIRST MILITARY CAMPAIGNS. ≠/

"WHY THE CHANCES FOR A DEMOCRATIC ARMY INCREASE AS THE WAR CONTINUES./

"EFFECTS PRODUCED BY A LONG PEACE AND A LONG WAR ON A DEMOCRATIC ARMY."

b. The soldier./

Modification of the soldier in democracies./

Military discipline. Relationship of the soldier and of the officer. Driving force of actions./

Reaction of this on the sentiment of honor. An aristocratic body of officers formulates arbitrary laws of honor./

[Note, which seems later] Of honor in general in American society. That a democratic society can have virtue, but not what we call honor. Honor is an arbitrary

Every army that begins a military campaign after a long peace risks being defeated; every army that has waged war for a long time has great chances to win: this truth is particularly applicable to democratic armies.

In aristocracies, the military life, being a privileged career, is honored even in times of peace. Men who have great talents, great enlightenment and a great ambition embrace it; the army is, in everything, at the level of the nation; often it even surpasses it.

We have seen how, on the contrary, among democratic peoples, the elite of the nation moves little by little away from the military career in order to seek, by other roads, consideration, power and above all wealth. After a long peace, and in democratic times periods of peace are long, the army is always inferior to the country itself. War finds it in this state;[c] and until war has changed it, there is a danger for the country and for the army.

I showed how, in democratic armies and in times of peace, the right of seniority is the supreme and inflexible law for advancement. That follows

law, a convention that needs to be minutely detailed and interpreted by a body of arbiters.

[In the margin: Honor is an aristocratic convention relative to the manner in which you must envisage human actions./

What I have to say about honor seems to me too important to be said in relation to other things.]

Precede this with an oratorical turn. If I am understood, I am assured of not hurting anyone. But I am afraid of not being able to make myself easily understood (*Rubish,* 2).

c. In the manuscript:

<But war does not take long to change it.

As the military spirit awakens to the noise of arms, as great national dangers draw all eyes toward the army, as great fortunes suddenly occur on the fields of battle, the military life rises in the esteem of men and the most immense and boldest ambitions turn toward it.

This revolution is inevitable, but it cannot take place in a moment; and there is a danger for the army and for the State until it is accomplished.>

[In the margin] ≠To delete I think because it is not *necessary* there and is necessary further along.

French of the XIXth century.≠

not only, as I said, from the constitution of these armies, but also from the very constitution of the people, and will always be found.

Moreover, since among these peoples the officer is something in the country only because of his military position, and since he draws all his consideration and all his comfort from it, he only withdraws or is excluded from the army at the very end of life.

The result of these two causes is that when, after a long peace, a democratic people finally takes up arms, all the leaders of its army are found to be old men. I am not speaking only about the generals, but about the subordinate officers, most of whom have remained immobile, or have been able to move only step by step. If you consider a democratic army after a long peace, you see with surprise that all the soldiers are not far from childhood and all the leaders are in their waning years; so that the first lack experience; and the second, vigor.

That is a great cause of reverses; for the first condition to conduct war well is to be young; I would not have dared to say it, if the greatest captain of modern times had not said so.

These two causes do not act in the same way on aristocratic armies.

Since you advance there by right of birth much more than by right of seniority, you always find in all the ranks a certain number of young men who bring to war all the first energy of body and soul.

Moreover, as men who seek military honors among an aristocratic people have an assured position in civilian society, they rarely wait in the army for the approach of old age to surprise them. After devoting to the career of arms the most vigorous years of their youth, they withdraw and go to spend the remainder of their mature years at home.

A long peace not only fills democratic armies with old officers, it also gives to all the officers habits of body and mind that make them little suited to war. The man who has lived for a long time amid the peaceful and half-hearted atmosphere of democratic mores yields with difficulty at first to the hard work and austere duties that war imposes. If he does not absolutely

lose the taste for arms, he at least takes on ways of living that prevent him from winning.

Among aristocratic peoples, the softness of civilian life exercises less influence on military mores, because among these peoples the aristocracy leads the army. Now, an aristocracy, however immersed in delights it may be, always has several other passions than that of well-being, and it readily makes the temporary sacrifice of its well-being in order to satisfy those passions better.

I showed how in democratic armies, in times of peace, the delays in advancement are extreme. The officers at first bear this state of things with impatience; they become agitated, restless and despairing; but in the long run, most of them resign themselves to it. Those who have the most ambition and resources leave the army; the others, finally adjusting their tastes and their desires to their mediocre lot, end up considering the military life from a civilian perspective. What they value most about it is the comfort and the stability that accompany it; on the assurance of this small fortune, they base the entire picture of their future, and they ask only to be able to enjoy it peacefully.

Thus, not only does a long peace fill democratic armies with old officers, but it often gives the instincts of old men even to those who are still at a vigorous age.[d]

I have equally shown how among democratic nations, in times of peace, the military career was little honored and not much followed.

This public disfavor is a very heavy burden that weighs on the spirit of the army. Souls are as if bent down by it; and when war finally arrives, they cannot regain their elasticity and their vigor in a moment.

A similar cause of moral weakness is not found in aristocratic armies.

d. In the margin:

<Perhaps here this idea (I do not believe so).

This troublesome influence of peace makes itself much less felt in aristocratic armies because the officers who are found there, having an assured well-being before entering the career of arms, are only seeking reputation, the sole good that they are lacking. This same need is felt by them at all times. The length of peace does not weaken it and war, no matter when it occurs, always seems to them the best occasion to satisfy it.>

[<Among aristocratic peoples the career of arms is always honored, whatever the current of public opinion might otherwise be.>] Officers there never find themselves lowered in their own eyes and in those of their fellows, because apart from their military grandeur, they are great by themselves.

If the influence of peace made itself felt in the two armies in the same way, the results would still be different.

When the officers of an aristocratic army have lost the warrior spirit and the desire to raise themselves by the profession of arms, they still keep a certain respect for the honor of their order and an old habit of being first and giving the example. But when the officers of a democratic army no longer have love of war and military ambition, nothing remains.

So I think that a democratic people who undertakes a war after a long peace risks being defeated much more than another; but it must not allow itself to be easily demoralized by reverses, for the chances of its army increase with the very duration of the war.

When war, by continuing, has finally torn all citizens away from their peaceful labors and made all their small undertakings fail, it happens that the same passions that made them attach so much value to peace turn toward arms. War, after destroying all industries, becomes itself the great and sole industry, and then the ardent and ambitious desires given birth by equality are directed from all sides toward it alone. This is why these same democratic nations that are so hard to drag onto the field of battle sometimes do such prodigious things there, once you have finally succeeded in having them take up arms.

As war more and more draws all eyes toward the army, as you see it create in a short time great reputations and great fortunes, the elite of the nation takes up the career of arms; all the naturally enterprising, proud and warlike spirits produced not only by the aristocracy, but by the entire country, are drawn in this direction.

Since the number of competitors for military honors is immense, and since war pushes each man roughly into his place, great generals always end up being found. A long war brings about in a democratic army what a revolution brings about in the people itself. It breaks the rules and makes all the extraordinary men appear suddenly. The officers whose soul and

body have become old during the peace are pushed aside, retire or die. In their place presses a crowd of young men whom the war has already hardened and whose desires it has expanded and inflamed. The latter want to grow greater at any price and constantly; after them come others who have the same passions and the same desires; and after those, others still, without finding any limits except those of the army. Equality allows ambition to all, and death takes care of providing chances to all ambitions. Death constantly opens ranks, empties places, closes and opens careers.

There is, moreover, a hidden connection between military mores and democratic mores that war exposes.

Men of democracies naturally have the passionate desire to acquire quickly the goods that they covet and to enjoy them easily. Most of them adore chance and fear death much less than pain. In this spirit they conduct commerce and industry; and this same spirit, carried by them onto the fields of battle, leads them readily to risk their lives in order to assure, in one moment, the rewards of victory. No greatness is more satisfying to the imagination of a democratic people than military greatness, a brilliant and sudden greatness that is obtained without work, by risking only your life.

Thus, while interest and tastes move the citizens of a democracy away from war, the habits of their soul prepare them to wage war well; they easily become good soldiers as soon as you have been able to tear them away from their affairs and their well-being.

If peace is particularly harmful to democratic armies, war therefore assures them advantages that other armies never have; and these advantages, although not very noticeable at first, cannot fail, in the long run, to give them victory.[e]

An aristocratic people who, fighting against a democratic nation, does not succeed in destroying it immediately with the first military campaigns, always greatly risks being defeated by it.

e. In the margin: "≠I had had the idea of introducing there chapter 'a' but that would interrupt the thread of the discourse.≠" Chapter "a" is the one that follows.

CHAPTER 25[a]

Of Discipline in Democratic Armies

It is a very widespread opinion, above all among aristocratic peoples, that the great social equality that reigns within democracies makes the soldier independent of the officer in the long run and thus destroys the bond of discipline.

It is an error. There are, in fact, two types of discipline that must not be confused.

When the officer is the noble and the soldier the serf; the one the rich man, and the other the poor man; when the first is enlightened and strong, and the second ignorant and weak, it is easy to establish between these two men the closest bond of obedience. The soldier has yielded to military discipline before entering the army, so to speak, or rather military discipline is only a perfecting of social servitude. In aristocratic armies, the soldier ends up easily enough being as though indifferent to everything except to the order of his leaders. He acts without thinking, triumphs without ardor, and dies without complaining. In this state, he is no longer a man, but more a very fearsome animal trained for war.

Democratic peoples must give up hope of ever obtaining from their soldiers this blind, scrupulous, resigned and totally constant obedience that aristocratic peoples impose on their soldiers without difficulty. The state of society does not prepare their soldiers for it; democratic peoples risk losing their natural advantages by wanting to gain that obedience artificially.

a. As has been pointed out, in notebook YTC, CVf, p. 51, this chapter was part of the preceding one. In the jacket of the *rubish* you find this note: "Chapter too small and of too little importance to be alone, but I do not know what to combine it with./

"I am not sure that it is not mediocre" (*Rubish,* 2).

Among democratic peoples, military discipline must not try to obliterate the free impulse of souls; it can only aspire to direct it; the obedience that it creates is less exact, but more impetuous and more intelligent. Its root is in the very will of the man who obeys; it rests not on his instinct alone, but on his reason; consequently discipline often grows tighter on its own as danger makes it more necessary. The discipline of an aristocratic army readily relaxes in war, because this discipline is based on habits, and because war disturbs these habits. The discipline of a democratic army, on the contrary, becomes firmer before the enemy, because each soldier then sees very clearly that to conquer he must remain silent and obey.

The peoples who have done the most considerable things by war have known no other discipline than the one I am talking about. Among the ancients, only free men and citizens, who differed little from each other and were accustomed to treating each other as equals, were received in the armies. In this sense, you can say that the armies of antiquity were democratic, although they came from the aristocracy; consequently in those armies a sort of fraternal familiarity reigned between the officer and the soldier. You will be convinced by reading Plutarch's *Lives of the Great Captains.* The soldiers there speak constantly and very freely to their generals, and the latter listen willingly to the speeches of their soldiers and respond to them. It is by these words and these examples, much more than by compulsion and punishments that they lead them. You would say they were companions as much as leaders.

I do not know if Greek and Roman soldiers ever perfected to the same degree as the Russians[b] the small details of military discipline; but that did not prevent Alexander from conquering Asia, and Rome, the world.

b. In a version of the drafts: ". . . the Russians or the English . . ." (*Rubish,* 2).

CHAPTER 26[a]

Some Considerations on War in Democratic Societies

[<War exercises such a prodigious influence on the fate of all peoples that you will pardon me, I hope, for not abandoning the subject that deals with it without trying to exhaust it.>]

When the principle of equality develops not only in one nation, but at the same time among several neighboring nations, as is seen today in Europe, the men who inhabit these various countries, despite the disparity of languages, customs and laws, are nevertheless similar on this point that they equally fear war and conceive the same love for peace.[1] In vain does

a. All democratic peoples are similar in the love of peace. All are equally led to commerce by equality, and commerce links their interests so that they cannot hurt their neighbor without harming themselves. So wars are rare. But they are great because these two peoples cannot set about to make war on a small scale.

Since men are similar, only numbers decide, from that the obligation for large armies. Thus armies seem to grow as the military spirit fades.

Great changes take place as well in the manner of making war.

A democratic people can more easily than another conquer and be conquered (illegible word). Why you always march on the capitals. Why civil wars become very difficult (YTC, CVf, pp. 51–52).

On the jacket of the chapter: "≠Perhaps all that will be to delete./
Chapter to look at again closely, done a bit too hastily.≠"

The idea that decentralization hinders the rapidity of reaction but increases the capacity of resistance is already found set forth in a letter of 1828 to Beaumont. This letter comments at length on the *History of England* of John Lingard (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 53).

1. *The fear that European peoples show for war is not only due to the progress that equality*

ambition or anger arm princes; a sort of apathy and universal benevolence pacifies them in spite of themselves and makes them drop the sword from their hands. Wars become rarer.

As equality, developing at the same time in several countries, simultaneously pushes the men who inhabit them toward industry and commerce, not only are their tastes similar, but also their interests mingle and become entangled, so that no nation can inflict harm on others that does not come back on itself, and all end by considering war as a calamity almost as great for the victor as for the defeated.

Thus, on the one hand, it is very difficult in democratic centuries to bring peoples to fight with each other, but, on the other hand, it is almost impossible for two of them to make war in isolation. The interests of all are so intertwined, their opinions and their needs so similar, that no people can keep itself at rest when the others are agitated. So wars become rarer; but when they arise, they are on a field more vast.

Democratic peoples who are neighbors do not become similar only on a few points, as I have just said; they end by resembling each other in nearly everything.[2]

has made among them; I do not need, I think, to point it out to the reader. Apart from this permanent cause, there are several accidental ones that are very powerful. I will cite, before all the others, the extreme weariness that the wars of the Revolution and of the Empire have left.

2. *That comes not solely from the fact that peoples have the same social state, but from the fact that this same social state is such that it leads men naturally to imitate each other and to blend.*

When citizens are divided into castes and into classes, not only do they differ from each other, but also they have neither the taste or the desire to become alike; each man, on the contrary, seeks more and more to keep intact his own opinions and habits and to remain himself. The spirit of individuality is very robust.

When a people has a democratic social state, that is to say that neither castes nor classes exist within it any longer and that all citizens there are more or less equal in enlightenment and in property, the human spirit heads in the opposite direction. Men are similar, and moreover they suffer in a way from not being similar. Far from wanting to preserve what can still make each one of them different, they ask only to lose that singularity in order to blend into the common mass, which alone in their eyes represents right and strength. The spirit of individuality is almost destroyed.

Now this similitude of peoples has very important consequences concerning war.

When I ask myself why the Helvetic confederation of the XVth century made the largest and most powerful nations of Europe tremble, while today its power is in exact proportion to its population, I find that the Swiss have become similar to all the men who surround them, and those men to the Swiss; so that, since numbers alone make the difference between them, victory necessarily belongs to the biggest battalions. One of the results of the democratic revolution taking place in Europe is therefore to make the force of numbers prevail on every battlefield, and to compel all the small nations to become incorporated into the large ones, or at least to take part in the policy of the latter.[c]

In times of aristocracy, even those who are naturally similar aspire to create imaginary differences between them. In times of democracy, even those who naturally are not alike ask only to become similar and copy each other, so much is the spirit of each man always carried along by the general movement of humanity.

Something similar makes itself noticed as well from people to people. Two peoples would have the same aristocratic social state; they would be able to remain very distinct and very different, because the spirit of aristocracy is to become more individual. But two neighboring peoples could not have the same democratic social state without immediately adopting similar opinions and mores, because the spirit of democracy makes men tend to assimilate.[b]

b. In the manuscript, this note is part of the text and continues in this way:

. . . to assimilate. <≠In centuries of inequality each nation takes great care therefore to keep itself apart and to remain distinct, while in centuries of equality all nations come closer together, follow each other and help each other.

The democratic social state, coming to be established at the same time among several peoples, makes all citizens there more or less similar and this same social state makes them all individually weak. Two causes which powerfully facilitate <in these same periods> the birth and the consolidation of great empires. For the first gives to the latter countries a natural propensity to live in common and the second allows forcing them to do so [v: prevents them from separating from each other] once you have succeeded in uniting them. Thus you can say in a *general* way that, as the social state of men becomes more democratic, small nations tend to disappear and large ones are established, which makes wars become rarer and embrace a larger space.≠>

c. Baden, 5 August 1836.

I wondered today to myself why certain small peoples of Europe such as the Swiss for example had formerly played such a great role, while today their power had be-

[≠This must necessarily make wars rarer and greater.

This resemblance that the citizens of different peoples have with each other has still many other consequences.≠]

Since the determining factor for victory is numbers, the result is that each people must with all its efforts strain to bring the most men possible onto the field of battle.

When you could enroll under the colors a type of troops superior to all the others, such as the Swiss infantry or the French cavalry of the XVIth century, you did not consider that you had the need to levy very large armies; but it is not so when all soldiers are equally valuable.

The same cause that gives birth to this new need also provides the means to satisfy it. For, as I said, when all men are similar, they are all weak. The social power is naturally much stronger among democratic peoples than anywhere else. So these peoples, at the same time that they feel the desire to call all the male population to arms, have the ability to assemble them there; this means that, in centuries of equality, armies seem to grow as the military spirit fades.[d]

In the same centuries, the manner of making war is also changed by the same causes.

come in exact proportion to their number and their strength, so that while the confederation of the XVth century made the greatest continental powers tremble, today there is no people of Europe having four or five million inhabitants that cannot in the long run oppress Switzerland, which has only two.

The reason is that the Swiss have become more or less similar in everything to the peoples who are around them and the latter to the Swiss, so that, since numbers alone make the difference between them, to the biggest battalions necessarily belongs victory.

One of the results of the great democratic revolution that is taking place among peoples as well as between individuals will therefore have as a final result to make the force of numbers prevail everywhere and to deliver small nations without hope to the tyranny of large ones [v: they are forced to become incorporated into the large ones or to take part in their policy] (*Rubish,* 2).

d. In the margin: "<Comfort does not prevent the military from fighting but it prevents the bourgeois from taking up arms.>"

Machiavelli[e] says in his book *The Prince* "that it is much more difficult to subjugate a people who have a prince and barons for leaders than a nation which is led by a prince and slaves." Let us put, in order not to offend anyone, public officials in the place of slaves and we will have a great truth, very applicable to our subject.

It is very difficult for a great aristocratic people to conquer its neighbors and to be conquered by them. It cannot conquer them, because it can never gather all its forces and hold men together for a long time; and it can never be conquered, because the enemy finds everywhere small centers of resistance that stop it. I will compare war in an aristocratic country to war in a country of mountains; the defeated find at every instant the occasion to rally in new positions and to hold firm there.

e. Machiavelli in his horrible work *The Prince* expresses a true and profound idea when he says in chapter IV that among principalities those that are governed by a *prince and slaves* must be clearly distinguished from those that are governed by a *prince and barons.*

The first, he says, are difficult to conquer because you cannot find within them subjects powerful enough to aid the conquest, and because the sovereign who governs them can easily gather all the forces of the empire against you.

Conquest accomplished, the same reasons allow you to preserve it easily.

The second are easy to penetrate because it is not difficult to win over a few of the great men of the kingdom. But does the conqueror want to hold on? He experiences all sorts of difficulties. It is not enough for him to extinguish the race of the prince; a crowd of powerful lords will always remain who will put themselves at the head of the malcontents, and since it is impossible for him to make every one content and to destroy those powerful lords, he will soon be chased away.

Machiavelli explains in this way the ease that Alexander had establishing himself on the throne of Darius and the difficulty that has always been encountered in conquering France.

Machiavelli who after all is only a superficial man, clever at discovering secondary causes, but from whom great general causes escape, touches there accidentally and without seeing it one of the great political consequences that clearly follow from a democratic or aristocratic social state.

Democratic States in fact make very much greater efforts to defend themselves than others, but once beaten and conquered, there is less of a remedy than among aristocratic nations.

To this cause you must equally attribute the difficulty of making long civil wars among democratic peoples.

As democratic peoples become more democratic you can count on the fact that civil wars there will become rarer and shorter. This is what explains the length of wars as regards religion, unless in a democratic country there are provinces strongly constituted, in which case there will be foreign wars in the form of civil war (*Rubish,* 2).

Precisely the opposite makes itself seen among democratic nations.

The latter easily bring all their available forces to the field of battle, and when the nation is rich and numerous, it easily becomes victorious; but once it has been defeated and its territory has been penetrated, few resources remain to it, and if it gets to the point of having its capital taken, the nation is lost. That is very easily explained; since each citizen is individually very isolated and very weak, no one can either defend himself or offer a point of support to others. In a democratic country only the State is strong; since the military strength of the State is destroyed by the destruction of its army and its civil power paralyzed by the taking of its capital, the rest forms nothing more than a multitude without rule and without strength that cannot struggle against the organized power that attacks it. I know that you can reduce the danger by creating liberties and, consequently, provincial entities, but this remedy will always be insufficient.

Not only will the population then no longer be able to continue the war, but it is to be feared that it will not want to try.

[≠The greatest difficulty that a democratic population finds is not to defend itself with weapons in hand, but to want to defend itself in such a way.≠][f]

According to the law of nations adopted by civilized nations, wars do not have as a purpose to appropriate the goods of individuals, but only to seize political power. Private property is destroyed only accidentally and in order to attain the second objective.

When an aristocratic nation is invaded after the defeat of its army, the nobles, although they are at the same time the rich, prefer to continue to defend themselves individually rather than to submit; for if the conqueror remained master of the country, he would take away their political power to which they are even more attached than to their property; so they prefer combat to conquest, which is for them the greatest misfortune, and they easily carry the people with them, because the people have contracted the long custom of following and obeying them, and besides have almost nothing to risk in war.

f. In the margin: "≠Bad in form but the idea of transition good.≠"

In a nation where equality of conditions reigns,[g] each citizen takes, on the contrary, only a small part in political power, and often takes no part at all; on the other hand, everyone is independent and has property to lose; so that there conquest is feared much less and war much more than among an aristocratic people. It will always be very difficult to cause a democratic population to take up arms when war is brought to its territory.[h] This is why it is necessary to give to these peoples rights and a political spirit that suggests to each person some of the interests that cause nobles to act in aristocracies.

It is very necessary that princes and other leaders of democratic nations remember: only the passion and the habit of liberty can, with advantage, combat the habit and the passion of well-being. I imagine nothing better prepared for conquest, in case of reverses, than a democratic people who does not have free institutions.

Formerly you began military campaigns with few soldiers; you fought small battles and conducted long sieges. Now you fight great battles, and as soon as you can march freely ahead, you race toward the capital in order to end the war with one blow.

Napoleon, it is said, invented this new system. It did not depend on one man, whoever he was, to create such a system. The manner in which Napoleon made war was suggested to him by the state of society of his time, and it succeeded for him because it was marvelously suited to this state and because he put it to use for the first time. Napoleon is the first to have traveled at the head of an army the path to all the capitals. But it is the ruin of feudal[j] society that had opened this road to him. It is to be believed that, if this extraordinary man had been born three centuries ago, he would not have gathered the same fruits from his method, or rather he would have had another method.

g. The manuscript says: "In a democratic nation."

h. "Difficulty of making a democratic people take up arms.

"That is true in all democratic countries, but above all in democratic countries that do not have free institutions" (*Rubish,* 2).

j. The manuscript says: "But it is the progress of equality of conditions that had opened it."

I will add only one more word about civil wars, for I am afraid of tiring the patience of the reader.

Most of the things I have said concerning foreign wars apply with stronger reason to civil wars [<and it is there above all that the strength of the State and the weakness of individuals are revealed>]. Men who live in democratic countries do not naturally have the military spirit; they sometimes take it on when they are dragged, despite themselves, onto the fields of battle. But to rise up by himself, in a body, and to expose himself willingly to the miseries that war and above all civil war bring, is a choice that the man of democracies does not make. Only the most adventurous citizens agree to throw themselves into such a risk; the mass of the population remains immobile.

Even when the mass of the population would like to act, it does not easily succeed in doing so; for it does not find within it ancient and well-established influences to which it wishes to submit, no already known leaders to gather the malcontents, to regulate and to lead them; no political powers placed below the national power, which effectively come to support the resistance put up against the nation's power.

In democratic countries, the moral power of the majority is immense, and the material forces at its disposal are out of proportion with those that, at first, it is possible to unite against it. The party in the majority's seat, which speaks in its name and uses its power, triumphs therefore, in one moment and without difficulty, over all particular resistances. It does not even allow them the time to be born; it crushes them in germ.

So those who, among these peoples, want to make a revolution by arms, have no other resources than to seize unexpectedly the already functioning machine of the government, which can be carried out by a surprise attack rather than by a war; for from the moment when a war is official, the party which represents the State is almost always sure to win.

The only case in which a civil war could arise would be the one in which, the army being divided, one portion raised the banner of revolt and the other remained faithful. An army forms a very tightly bound and very hardy small society which is able to be self-sufficient for a while. The war could be bloody, but it would not be long; for either the army in revolt would draw the government to its side just by showing its strength or by its first

victory, and the war would be over; or the battle would begin, and the portion of the army not supported by the organized power of the State would soon disperse on its own or be destroyed.

So you can accept, as a general truth, that in the centuries of equality, civil wars will become much rarer and shorter.[3]

3. *It is well understood that I am speaking here about* single *democratic nations and not about confederated democratic nations. In confederations, since the preponderant power always resides, despite fictions, in the government of the state and not in the federal government, civil wars are only disguised foreign wars.*

FOURTH PART[a]

a. Plan of this part in a draft:

General influence of democratic ideas and mores on government./

≠1. How democratic ideas favor the establishment of a centralized government.
2. How id. mores do id.
3. Particular causes, but related to the great democratic cause, that can lead there.
4. Type of despotism to fear. Here show administrative despotism and the manner in which it could successively take hold≠ of private life. Dangers of this state.
5. Remedies. Here all that I can say on association, aristocratic persons, liberty, great passions . . ./

Last chapter./

1. New affirmation of the irresistible march of democracy.
2. *General* judgment of this new state.
3. Nations can turn it to good or to detestable account and they hang in the balance (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 73–74).

Plan of the chapter in the *rubish:*

General idea of the last chapter./
To do well, this chapter must fit together well with those that precede, which are:

1. *Ambition,* in which I show the sentiment of ambition *universal* and *small.*
2. *Revolutions,* in which I show that great revolutions will be rare.
3. The *army,* in which I show the restlessness and habitual discontent of democratic armies.

I believe that what would have to be done now would be this:

1. Show how the human mind plunges on all sides among democratic peoples into the idea of *unity,* of *uniformity.*
2. Show afterward how that idea leads to administrative despotism.
[To the side: A fact certainly new in our hemisphere, for if I am not mistaken the thing has existed for two thousand years in the Antipodes.]

3. Necessity of upholding human individuality. Union of liberty and equality. Separation of the revolutionary element.

[To the side: Here idea of aristocratic persons.]/
These are three ideas that follow each other well.

This is found in a jacket placed with the *rubish* of the chapter on material well-being (chapter 10 of the second part). The jacket bears this commentary: "How equality of ranks suggests to men the taste for liberty and for equality. Why democratic peoples love equality better than liberty./

"Piece from which I will probably have to make the second section of the chapter and that must be carefully reexamined while reviewing this chapter. 4 September 1838" (*Rubish,* 1).

The drafts reproduced in notebook CVd bear this commentary at the head:

Ideas and fragments that all relate more or less to the great chapter entitled: How the ideas and the sentiments suggested by equality influence the political constitution./

Sketch of the final chapter./

Individualism. Natural [Material (ed.)] enjoyments./

Perhaps put a part of all that in the chapter on sentiments that favor the concentration of power.

Particularly what I say about the taste for material enjoyments, and individualism. The piece.

More probably place in the work a chapter on *material enjoyments* and *individualism,* pieces of this section which merit being kept (28 July 1838).

1bis. 1. Summary of the book. That equality of conditions is an irresistible, accomplished fact, which will break all those who want to struggle against it. This above all true when equality (illegible word).

[To the side: Order of ideas of this chapter.

2. Equality of conditions suggests equally to men the taste for *liberty* and the taste for *equality.*

But the one is a *superficial* and *passing* taste. The other a *tenacious* and ardent passion.]

2. That despotism can hope to succeed in becoming established only by respecting equality and by flattering democratic tendencies.

3. How a government that aspires to despotism must set about doing so and the opportunities that the ideas, the habits and the instincts of democracy provide for it.

I. Why democratic peoples are naturally led to the centralization of power.

Theory of centralization presents itself naturally to the mind of men when equality exists.

Difficulty of knowing to whom to return intermediary powers. Jealousy of the neighbor. All this increased by revolutions.

II. Democratic taste for material well-being which leads men to become absorbed in searching for it or in enjoying it.

Of the Influence That Democratic Ideas and Sentiments Exercise on Political Society[b]

III. Individualism which makes each man want to be occupied only with himself.

4. Since the government is, in this way, master of everything, it only needs *war* to destroy even the shadow of liberty.

1. Facility that it also finds in the democratic social state for that.

2. By this means, which will establish despotism, despots will be successively overturned. Picture analogous to that at the end of the Roman empire.

Aristocracy of men of war.

Having reached this point, you can hope to see the end of a tyrant, but not that of tyranny.

[To the side: Opposing view to all (illegible word).

1. To unite the spirit of liberty to the spirit of equality.

2. To separate the spirit of equality from the revolutionary spirit. Why the revolutionary spirit is more natural to democratic peoples and more (illegible word). Particular necessity in these democratic centuries for the spirit of equality. In democratic centuries, you must be scrupulous, extraordinarily respectful on this point] (YTC, CVd, pp. 1–3).

This part is missing in notebook CVf.

b. In the manuscript: "Do only a single chapter from all of that beginning with the foreword (a) and then divided into sections." This fourth part forms one single chapter in the manuscript and bears the number 60. The conclusion, which constitutes the last chapter, bears the number 61. Apart from the drafts of the chapter, there exist various drafts contained in jackets and bearing the following titles: UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM; NOTES OF THE CHAPTER; RELATIVE TO THE IDEA OF UNITY; IDEAS WHICH I CAN HOPE TO USE; and THOUGHTS TO ADD ON THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY DEMOCRATIC IDEAS ON THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT.

In July 1838 (*OCB,* VII, pp. 167–68), Tocqueville writes to his brother, Édouard, that he is working on the last part of his book and that this is composed of two short chapters. At the end of the month of August, he notes that he has already finished the draft of the first version; on October 1 he begins to work on the last chapter. Writing the draft and revision will take an entire year, and the two initial chapters will be replaced by a total of eight chapters. The quantity of notes and drafts testifies to Tocqueville's efforts to finish the part that he considered the most important of his work.

The manuscript and the drafts seem to indicate that the first chapter of this part was added at the end, and that the second and third chapters formed only one in the first drafts.

After having shown the ideas and the sentiments suggested by equality, I would badly fulfill the purpose of this book if, while concluding, I did not show what general influence these same sentiments and these same ideas can exercise on the government of human societies.

To succeed in doing that, I will often be obliged to retrace my steps. But I hope that the reader will not refuse to follow me when roads that he knows lead him toward some new truth.

CHAPTER I

Equality Naturally Gives Men the Taste for Free Institutions

Equality, which makes men independent of each other, makes them contract the habit and the taste to follow only their will in their personal actions. This complete independence, which they enjoy continually vis-à-vis their equals and in the practice of private life, disposes them to consider all authority with a discontented eye, and soon suggests to them the idea and the love of political liberty. So men who live in these times march on a natural slope that leads them toward free institutions. Take one of them at random; go back, if possible, to his primitive instincts; you will discover that, among the different governments, the one that he conceives first and that he prizes most, is the government whose leader he has elected and whose actions he controls.[a]

Of all the political effects that equality of conditions produces, it is this love of independence that first strikes our attention and that timid spirits fear even more; and we cannot say that they are absolutely wrong to be afraid, for anarchy has more frightening features in democratic countries than elsewhere.[b] Since citizens have no effect on each other, at the instant

a. In the manuscript: ". . . government based on the principle of sovereignty of the people."

b. What to do to combine the spirit of equality and the spirit of liberty and make liberty reign amid a leveled society.

This part is the most important for me./

The hydra of anarchy is the sacramental phrase of all the enemies of liberty. The cowardly, the corrupt, the servile try to outdo each other in repeating it. The weak and the honest say it also.

It is a monster that I must look in the face. For it is after all the great enemy of my ideas. What I want to bring along and to convince are honest souls. Well! The

when the national power that keeps them all in their place becomes absent, it seems that disorder must immediately be at its height and that, with each citizen on his own, the social body is suddenly going to find itself reduced to dust.

I am convinced nevertheless that anarchy is not the principal evil that democratic centuries must fear, but the least.

latter, at the point we have reached, are not afraid of despotism. They tremble before the hydra of anarchy. The fact is that there exists today a singular phenomenon for which we must account.

[To the side: It is honest men led by rogues who have always enslaved the world.

They do not see that in this way they are preparing habits, ideas, laws for all types of despotism, that of all or of one man. These men who today ask of power only to save them from anarchy resemble those drowning men who cling to a dead body and drag it away with them. By violent and reactionary laws, by the violation of existing laws, by the absence of laws, they destroy the ideas of the just and the unjust, of the permissible and the forbidden, of the legal and the illegal, and they thus open the door to all anarchical tyrannies. They are the pioneers of anarchy.]

Liberty and *power* gradually become weaker and each one in its own way. They are two exhausted and stiff old men who struggle with each other without either one winning, because their weaknesses, not their strengths, are equal; and grappling with each other, they roll together in the same dust.

Thus, those who say that liberty is weak are right. Those who maintain that power is weak are also right. What to conclude from that? Fix all the force of my mind on that.

[To the side: I believe, moreover, that the same symptoms presented themselves before the temporary or definitive enslavement of all peoples.]

To show that arbitrary and anti-liberal measures will not save us from the hydra of anarchy and to demonstrate that legal and liberal measures will not lead there, that is what we must above all work hard to do.

What modern nation (three illegible words) despotism, and how to break despotism without anarchy. Despotism is party to anarchy.

[To the side] What to think of the future of an unfortunate country in which there is an honest and pure man who says that he is not concerned about its posterity, but about himself; who says that country in the general sense is a word, that he very much wants the country to be and to remain free, provided that his fortune and his life remain sure, but that rather than putting these things in dogma [danger (ed.)], tyranny seems better to him; who says that he prefers a permanent, meddlesome, civilizing despotism to a temporary anarchy? And what to hope for his century when the other honest and pure men who surround the former approve his language? This is [illegible word] the sad spectacle that I had today, 7 February 1837 (YTC, CVd, pp. 16–18).

Equality produces, in fact, two tendencies: one leads men directly to independence and can push them suddenly as far as anarchy; the other leads them by a longer, more secret, but surer road toward servitude.

Peoples easily see the first and resist it; they allow themselves to be carried along by the other without seeing it; it is particularly important to show it.

As for me,[c] far from reproaching equality for the unruliness that it inspires, I praise it principally for that. I admire equality when I see it deposit deep within the mind and heart of each man this obscure notion of and this instinctive propensity for political independence. In this way equality prepares the remedy for the evil to which it gives birth. It is from this side that I am attached to it.

c. "As for me, I consider this taste for natural independence as the most precious present that equality has given to men" (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 45–46).

CHAPTER 2[a]

That the Ideas of Democratic Peoples in Matters of Government Naturally Favor the Concentration of Powers[b]

a. Order of this section.

The theoretical and philosophical idea of government among democratic peoples is uniformity and centralization.

[To the side: That democratic peoples imagine liberty only in the form of a great assembly of representatives with *strong* and *regulative* executive power.]

Diverse instincts which lead democratic peoples to love centralization of power.

1. Difficulty of knowing to whom to deliver provincial administration.

2. The noble having disappeared, incapacity of local [v: new] men, ignorance, above all at the beginning.

3. Envy of the neighbor. Sentiments above all visible when aristocracy has long reigned in a country

4. That a despot in *embryo* must loudly profess these doctrines, favor and approve interests.

≠5. Establish only a sole representative assembly, a strong and regulative executive power.≠

5. Establish only national representation, next to it an executive power which would be more or less subject to it, but which would be *strong, inquisitorial, regulative.*

[To the side: Among democratic peoples, it is not impossible that a government is centralizing and popular at the same time, and it can go so far as calling itself centralizing and liberal, and it is not impossible that it is believed.]

6. Individualism, material enjoyments (YTC, CVd, pp. 31–32).

b. Titles on the jacket that contains the manuscript: "WHAT IDEAS MEN NATURALLY CONCEIVE IN THE MATTER OF GOVERNMENT IN CENTURIES OF EQUALITY./

"HOW THE IDEAS THAT NATURALLY PRESENT THEMSELVES TO MEN IN CENTURIES OF EQUALITY LEAD THEM TO CONCENTRATE ALL POWERS."

[The principal notions that men form in the matter of government are not entirely arbitrary. They are born in each period out of the social state, and the mind receives them rather than creating them.][c]

The idea of secondary powers, placed between the sovereign and the subjects, presented itself naturally to the imagination of aristocratic peoples, because these powers included within them individuals or families that birth, enlightenment, wealth kept unrivaled and that seemed destined to command. This same idea is naturally absent from the minds of men in centuries of equality because of opposite reasons; you can only introduce it to their minds artificially, and you can only maintain it there with difficulty; while without thinking about it, so to speak, they conceive the idea of a unique and central power that by itself leads all citizens.

In politics, moreover, as in philosophy and in religion, the minds of democratic peoples receive simple and general ideas with delight. They are repulsed by complicated systems, and they are pleased to imagine a great nation all of whose citizens resemble a single model and are directed by a single power.

After the idea of a unique and central power, the one that presents itself most spontaneously to the minds of men in centuries of equality is the idea of a uniform legislation. As each one of them sees himself as little different from his neighbors, he understands poorly why the rule that is applicable to one man would not be equally applicable to all the others. The least privileges are therefore repugnant to his reason. The slightest dissimilarities in the political institutions of the same people wound him, and legislative uniformity seems to him to be the first condition of good government.

I find, on the contrary, that the same notion of a uniform rule, imposed equally on all the members of the social body, is as if foreign to the human mind in aristocratic centuries. It does not accept it, or it rejects it.

These opposite tendencies of the mind end up, on both sides, by becoming such blind instincts and such invincible habits, that they still direct actions, in spite of particular facts. Sometimes, despite the immense variety

c. To the side: "Be careful that this does not too much resemble the opening regarding *honor*."

of the Middle Ages, perfectly similar individuals were found; this did not prevent the legislator from assigning to each one of them diverse duties and different rights. And, on the contrary, in our times, governments wear themselves out in order to impose the same customs and the same laws on populations that are not yet similar.

As conditions become equal among a people, individuals appear smaller and society seems larger; or rather, each citizen, having become similar to all the others, is lost in the crowd, and you no longer notice anything except the vast and magnificent image of the people itself.[d]

This naturally gives men of democratic times a very high opinion of the privileges of the society and a very humble idea of the rights of the individual.[e] They easily agree that the interest of the one is everything and that the interest of the other is nothing. They grant readily enough that the power that represents the society possesses much more enlightenment and wisdom than any one of the men who compose it, and that its duty, as well as its right, is to take each citizen by the hand and to lead him.[f]

If you really want to examine our contemporaries closely, and to penetrate to the root of their political opinions, you will find a few of the ideas that I have just reproduced, and you will perhaps be astonished to find so much agreement among men who are so often at war with each other.

d. Note to the side of a first version: "Perhaps all these ideas, which seem to me clear and even too evident, will seem too metaphysical, and perhaps it will be necessary to put them within the reach of the ordinary reader by more detailed explanations?" (*Rubish,* 2).

e. *"To show better* also how in the United States the state breaks individuals and even organized groups of men [*corps*] with a prodigious ease, since the idea of individual rights there is weaker and more obscure than in England." Jacket, THOUGHTS TO ADD ON THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY DEMOCRATIC IDEAS ON THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT (*Rubish,* 2).

f. A note in the manuscript: "Can introduce piece (a) there."

This piece (a) specifies: "<A unique and central government [v: power] charged with dispensing the same laws to the entire State and with regulating in the same way each one of those who inhabit it, an intelligent, far-sighted and strong administration that enlightens, aids, constantly directs individuals, such is the ideal that in democratic times will always occur by itself to the imagination of men as soon as they come to think about government.>"

The Americans believe that, in each state,[TN8] social power must emanate directly from the people; but once this power is constituted, they imagine, so to speak, no limits for it; they readily recognize that it has the right to do everything.

As for the particular privileges granted to cities, to families or to individuals, they have lost even the idea. Their minds have never foreseen that the same law could not be applied uniformly to all the parts of the same state and to all the men who inhabit it.

[≠In Europe we reject the dogma of sovereignty of the people that the Americans accept; we give power another origin.≠][g]

These same opinions are spreading more and more in Europe; they are being introduced within the very heart of nations that most violently reject the dogma of sovereignty of the people. These nations give power a different origin than the Americans; but they envisage power with the same features. Among all nations, the notion of intermediary power is growing dim and fading.[h] The idea of a right inherent in certain individuals is disappearing rapidly from the minds of men; the idea of the all-powerful and so to speak unique right of society is coming to take its place. These ideas take root and grow as conditions become more equal and men more similar; equality gives birth to them and they in their turn hasten the progress of equality.[j]

Translator's Note 8: In this paragraph and in the next one, and in note e for p. 1196 and note a for p. 1206, the translator has repeated the pattern followed in the first volume. Where Tocqueville seems clearly to be referring to the American states, the translator has dropped the uppercase for state. Elsewhere, the uppercase is retained: State.

g. In the margin: "<These opinions have not been borrowed by the Americans from their fathers the English, for at the period of the establishment of the colonies, the English, no more than other Europeans, had not yet conceived of such opinions. Still today they have adopted them only in part. They introduce them only in our times, but with difficulty and as conditions become less different and men more similar.>"

h. In the margin: "<The problem with all this is that it seems to me to anticipate section IV, which I will be able to judge only when I am there. If so, it would be necessary to stop at the end of page 2 and make this chapter the head of the following chapter which would then be titled: *How the ideas* and the sentiments . . .>" Page 2 of the manuscript ends at the paragraph that begins thus: "If you really want to examine . . ."

j. On a loose sheet in the manuscript:

I listen to those among my fellow citizens who are most hostile to popular forms and I see that, according to them, the public administration must get involved in almost

In France, where the revolution I am speaking about is more advanced than in any other people of Europe, these same opinions have entirely taken hold of the mind. When you listen attentively to the voices of our different parties, you will see that there is not one of them that does not adopt them. Most consider that the government acts badly; but all think that the government must act constantly and put its hand to everything. Even those who wage war most harshly against each other do not fail to agree on this point. The unity, ubiquity, omnipotence of the social power, the uniformity of its rules, form the salient feature that characterizes all the political systems born in our times. You find them at the bottom of the most bizarre utopias.[k] The human mind still pursues these images when it dreams.

If such ideas present themselves spontaneously to the mind of individuals, they occur even more readily to the imagination of princes.

While the old social state of Europe deteriorates and dissolves, sovereigns develop new beliefs about their abilities and their duties; they understand for the first time that the central power that they represent can and must, by itself and on a uniform plan, administer all matters and all men. This opinion, which, I dare say, had never been conceived before our time by the kings of Europe, penetrates the mind of these princes to the deepest

everything and that it must impose the same rules on all. To regulate, to direct, to compel citizens constantly in principal affairs as well as in the least, such for them is its role. I go from there to those who think that all authority must come immediately from the people, and I hear the same discourse coming from them; and I return finally doubting if the most violent adversaries of the government are not more favorable to the concentration of powers than the government itself [v: if the exclusive friends of liberty are not more favorable to the centralization of power than its most violent adversaries].

k. See note b of p. 727.

level; it remains firm there amid the agitation of all the other opinions.[m] [A few perceive it very clearly, everyone glimpses it.][n]

So the men of today are much less divided than you imagine; they argue constantly in order to know into which hands sovereignty will be placed; but they agree easily about the duties and about the rights of sovereignty. All conceive the government in the image of a unique, simple, providential and creative power.

All the secondary ideas in political matters are in motion; that one remains fixed, inalterable; it never changes.[o] Writers and statesmen adopt it; the crowd seizes it avidly; the governed and those who govern agree about pursuing it with the same ardor; it comes first; it seems innate.

So it does not come from a caprice of the human mind, but it is a natural condition of the present state of men.

m. Order of ideas already followed./

1. Idea of a uniform legislation.
2. Idea of a unique power.
3. Immense idea of social right, very thin idea of individual right.
4. Confirmation of what precedes by the *ideas*[1] of the Americans, of the English, of the French . . . in the matter of government.

(1) Be very careful that it is not a matter of showing what is happening among these peoples, but the *ideas* that they are forming in the matter of government" (RELATIVE TO THE IDEA OF UNITY IN GENERAL, *Rubish,* 2).

n. In the margin: "≠This sentence excludes the preceding one. Either the one or the other must be removed.≠"

o. Note in the margin in a first version: "Perhaps here all the ultra-unitary extravagances, Saint-Simonianism . . ." (*Rubish,* 2).

CHAPTER 3

That the Sentiments of Democratic Peoples Are in Agreement with Their Ideas for Bringing Them to Concentrate Power[a]

If, in centuries of equality, men easily perceive the idea of a great central power, you cannot doubt, on the other hand, that their habits and their sentiments dispose them to recognize such a power and to lend it sup-

a. The idea of all this chapter is simple.
Equality gives birth to two tendencies:

1. One which takes men to *liberty.*
2. The other which distances men from *liberty* and leads them to *servitude.*

Liberty and *servitude* coming from *equality.* There is the idea of the chapter.
Equality comes only as source of *liberty* and of *servitude.*/
Now.

To know what makes men love *equality* more than *liberty;* it is a closely connected, but very distinct idea; for men could prefer equality to liberty, without equality being what pushed them toward servitude.

The comparison of the love of equality and the love of liberty is worth being made. But here it hinders the natural movement of the mind./

Make it a separate chapter which I will introduce afterward where I can (*Rubish,* 2).

It is possible that certain ideas on centralization set forth in this chapter and the following had their origin in the observations made by Tocqueville in England. In 1835, particularly, Tocqueville believed he had found in England a tendency toward centralization that he thought likely for the ensemble of democracies. The Poor Law and conversations with Mill and Reeve seem to have in part confirmed his theory for him (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, pp. 22, 26, 49, and 53); also see Seymour Drescher, *Tocqueville and England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964).

On 8 July 1838, when he began this last part, Tocqueville asked Beaumont for examples about centralization. Beaumont's answer is lost (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 311–12).

port.[b] The demonstration of this can be done in a few words, since most of the reasons have already been given elsewhere.

Men who inhabit democratic countries, having neither superiors, nor inferiors, nor habitual and necessary associates, readily fall back on themselves and consider themselves in isolation. I have had the occasion to show it at great length when the matter was individualism.

So these men never, except with effort, tear themselves away from their particular affairs in order to occupy themselves with common affairs; their natural inclination is to abandon the care of these affairs to the sole visible and permanent representative of collective interests, which is the State.

Not only do they not naturally have the taste for occupying themselves with public matters, but also they often lack time to do so. Private life is so active in democratic times, so agitated, so full of desires, of work, that hardly any energy or leisure is left to any man for political life.

It is not I who will deny that such inclinations are not invincible, since my principal goal in writing this book has been to combat them. I maintain only that, today, a secret force develops them constantly in the human heart, and that it is enough not to stop them for those inclinations to fill it up.

I have equally had the occasion to show how the growing love of well-being and the mobile nature of property made democratic peoples fear material disorder. The love of public tranquillity is often the only political passion that these peoples retain, and it becomes more active and more powerful among them, as all the others collapse and die; that naturally disposes citizens to give new rights constantly to or to allow new rights to be taken by the central power, which alone seems to them to have the interest and the means to defend them from anarchy while defending itself.[c]

b. "≠I see clearly how the fear of revolutions leads men to give great prerogatives to power in general, but not how it leads them to centralize power.≠" (*Rubish,* 2).

c. *7 March 1838. Unity, centralization.*

However animated you are against unity and the governmental unity that is called centralization, you cannot nonetheless deny that unity and centralization are

[<For they do not see around them either individual or corps that is by itself strong enough and lasting enough to defend itself and to defend them.>]

Since, in centuries of equality, no one is obliged to lend his strength to his fellow, and no one has the right to expect great support from his fellow, each man is independent and weak at the very same time. These two states, which must not be either envisaged separately or confused, give the citizen of democracies very contradictory instincts. His independence fills him with confidence and pride among his equals, and his debility makes him, from time to time, feel the need for outside help which he cannot expect from any of his equals, since they are all powerless and cold. In this extreme case, he turns his eyes naturally toward this immense being that alone rises up amidst the universal decline. His needs and, above all, his desires lead him constantly toward this being, and he ends by envisaging it as the sole and necessary support for individual weakness.[1]

the most powerful means to do quickly, energetically, and in a given place, very great things.

That reveals one of the reasons why in democratic centuries centralization and unity are loved so much. The character of these centuries is love of rapid and easy enjoyments and indifference about the future. In the eyes of all the public men of those times, centralization is the means of attaining quickly and without difficulty the results that they desire.

Thus equality gives birth to the idea of unity and the same equality suggests the taste for it (*Rubish,* 2).

1. *In democratic societies, only the central power has some stability in its position and some permanence in its enterprises. All the citizens are stirring constantly and becoming transformed. Now, it is in the nature of every government to want gradually to enlarge its sphere. So it is very difficult that in the long run the latter does not manage to succeed, since it acts with a fixed thought and a continuous will on men whose position, ideas and desires vary every day.*

Often it happens that the citizens work for it without wanting to do so.

Democratic centuries are times of experiments, of innovation and of adventures. A multitude of men is always engaged in a difficult or new enterprise that they are pursuing separately without being burdened by their fellows. The former very much accept, as a general principle, that the public power must not intervene in private affairs, but, by exception, each one of them desires that it helps him in the special matter that preoccupies him and seeks to draw the action of the government in his direction, all the while wanting to restrain it in all others.

Since a multitude of men has this particular view at the same time on a host of different

This finally makes understandable what often occurs among democratic peoples, where you see men, who endure superiors with such difficulty, patiently suffer a master, and appear proud and servile at the very same time.

The hatred that men bring to privilege increases as privileges become rarer and smaller, so that you would say that democratic passions become more inflamed at the very time when they find the least sustenance.[d] I have already given the reason for this phenomenon. No inequality, however great, offends the eye when all conditions are unequal; while the smallest dissimilarity seems shocking amid general uniformity; the sight of it becomes more unbearable as uniformity is more complete. So it is natural that love of equality grows constantly with equality itself; by satisfying it, you develop it.

This immortal and more and more burning hatred, which animates democratic peoples against the least privileges, singularly favors the gradual concentration of all political rights in the hands of the sole representative of the State. The sovereign, necessarily and without dispute above all cit-

matters, the sphere of the central power expands imperceptibly in all directions, even though each one of them wishes to limit it. So a democratic government increases its attributions by the sole fact that it lasts. Time works for it; it profits from all accidents; individual passions help it even without their knowing, and you can say that a democratic government becomes that much more centralized the older the democratic society is.

d. This proposition that *hatred of inequality is that much greater as inequality is less* is well proved by what happened among aristocratic peoples themselves within the interior of each class. The nobles were not jealous of the king, but of those among them who rose above the others, and they called loudly for equality. As long as the bourgeois were different from the nobles, they were not jealous of the nobles, but of each other; and if we get down to the bottom of our heart, won't we all be appalled to see that envy makes itself felt there above all in regard to our neighbors, our friends and our near relations? You are not jealous of those people because they are neighbors, friends and relations, but because they are our fellows and our equals.

The hatred of inequality in proportion as inequality is less is therefore a truth in all times and applicable to all men (NEW IDEAS RELATIVE TO DEMOCRATIC SENTIMENTS THAT FAVOR CENTRALIZATION, *Rubish,* 2).

izens, does not excite the envy of any one of them, and each one believes that all the prerogatives that he concedes to the sovereign are taken away from his equals.

[<In centuries of equality, each man, living independent of all of his fellows, becomes accustomed to directing his private affairs without constraint. When these same men are united in common, they naturally conceive the idea of and the taste for administering themselves by themselves. So equality leads men toward administrative decentralization, but creates at the same time powerful instincts which turn them away from it.>][e]

The man of democratic centuries obeys only with an extreme repugnance his neighbor who is his equal; he refuses to acknowledge in him an enlightenment superior to his own; he mistrusts his neighbor's justice and regards his power with jealousy; he fears and despises him; he loves to make him feel at every instant the common dependence that they both have on the same master.

Every central power that follows these natural instincts loves equality and favors it; for equality [(of conditions)] singularly facilitates the action of such a power, extends it and assures it.

You can say equally that every central government adores [legislative] uniformity; uniformity[f] spares it from the examination of an infinity of details with which it would have to be concerned, if the rule had to be made for men, rather than making all men indiscriminately come under the same rule. Thus, the government loves what the citizens love, and it naturally hates what they hate. This community of sentiments, which, among democratic nations, continually unites in the same thought each individual and the sovereign power, establishes between them a secret and permanent sym-

e. In the margin: "≠Perhaps keep this for the place where I will speak about *liberal* instincts created by equality.≠"

f. "Pantheism.

"Saint-Simonianism." (In the *Rubish* RELATIVE TO THE IDEA OF UNITY IN GENERAL, *Rubish,* 2.)

"Saint-Simonian theory and other democratic theories. Pantheism. Agreement of the governmental and radical press on this point." (In the jacket that bears the title: "UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM./

"Mixture of administrative and judicial power./

"23 March 1838" *Rubish,* 2.)

pathy. You pardon the government its faults in favor of its tastes; public confidence abandons the government only with difficulty amid its excesses and its errors, and returns as soon as it is called back. Democratic peoples often hate the agents of the central power; but they always love this power itself. [<Because they consider it as the most powerful instrument that they could use as needed to help them make everyone who escapes from the common rule come back to it.>

I said that in times of equality the idea of intermediary powers set between simple individuals and the government did not naturally present itself to the human mind. I add that men who live in these centuries envisage such powers only with distrust and submit to them only with difficulty.]

Thus, I have come by two different roads to the same end. I have shown that equality suggested to men the thought of a unique, uniform and strong government. I have just shown that it gives them the taste for it; so today nations are tending toward a government of this type. The natural inclination of their mind and heart leads them to it, and it is enough for them not to hold themselves back in order to reach it.

I think that, in the democratic centuries that are going to open up, individual independence and local liberties will always be a product of art. Centralization will be the natural government.

CHAPTER 4[a]

a. Appendix of section.—Section IV./
Ideas of the chapter.

1. *When liberty has existed before equality,* it establishes habits that are opposed to the excessive development of the central power.

2. *When equality has developed rapidly with the aid of a revolution,* the taste for intermediary powers disappears more quickly. Centralization becomes necessary in a way.

3. Revolution makes hatred and jealousy of the neighbor more intense and leads either the upper or the lower classes to want to centralize.

4. Enlightenment and ignorance.

5. War.

6. Disorder.

7. Democratic nature of the central power.

[In the margin: New ideas.

1. Extraordinary talents.

2. Two ideas relative to revolutions and which have not been treated there.

3. When a people has been formed from several peoples, like the Americans.

≠4. When democratic society is ancient, the permanent ambition of the g[overnment (ed.)] gives it the advantage in the long run, because of the shifting desires of the citizens and of the multitude of (illegible word) into which they are constantly throwing themselves.≠]

The entire vice of this chapter seems to me to reside in this:

1. Definitively, the greatest number and the principal ones of the particular reasons that I give are connected with the particular accident of a *revolution.* So it would be necessary to put them separately and to announce in advance that I am going to deal with this order of particular causes. It is worth the trouble.

2. It would be necessary to put *those causes* in a better order so that the mind would pass better from one to the other.

It is on these two points that I must make a final effort while reviewing one last time.

6 November 1839 (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 74–76).

On a page of drafts:

Note applicable to all the sections, but principally to section III./
I do not believe that in all this chapter and particularly in this section I have made

Of Some Particular and Accidental Causes That End up Leading a Democratic People to Centralize Power or That Turn Them Away from Doing So[b]

sufficient use of America because of the preoccupation that I had that the principal goal of the chapter was to speak about Europe and to Europe. But even with this goal, perhaps it is necessary to show better what is happening in America. I showed a glimpse of it in several places, but perhaps it would be worth more, instead of *spreading* America around as I have done, to gather it together at one point and show:

1. That we must distinguish between the Union and the states. The national element finding itself only in the *state.*

2. To show or rather to recall in what way the state is more centralized than the monarchies of Europe and in what way less centralized. The government more, the administration less. There are pages of my first work to reread and perhaps to cite. .-.[what (ed.)].- makes administrative centralization less great in America than in Europe despite equality.

If I do not make the reader see America clearly, he will perhaps be invincibly opposed to my ideas, because seen in a haze and considered roughly, America seems in fact to provide an opposite argument.

Reflect on all that while reviewing (*Rubish,* 2).

b. In the drafts:

Other causes or particular causes that can favor centralization./

To introduce this in the preceding chapters or to put it in a supplementary chapter./

[In the margin: ≠Perhaps show how the Americans have escaped excessive centralization of powers with the help of *favorable particular causes.*

Separation of colonies.

No foreign wars.

Few internal troubles.

Habits of local government.

Principles of aristocratic liberty without mixture of aristocracy.

Idea of rights without hatreds that lead to violating rights./

≠1. Superior men who all believe they have an interest in centralization.

2. Passions of all political men which lead to centralization.

3. Superficial minds.≠

3. External danger.

4. Internal troubles.[a]

5. Hatred of the remnants of an aristocracy. England.

If all democratic peoples are carried instinctively toward centralization of powers, they are led there in an unequal manner. It depends on particular circumstances that can develop or limit the natural effects of the social state. These circumstances are in very great number; I will only speak about a few.

Among men who have lived free for a long time before becoming equal, the instincts that liberty gave combat, up to a certain point, the tendencies suggested by equality; and although among those men the central power increases its privileges, the individuals there never entirely lose their independence.

But when equality happens to develop among a people who have never known or who, for a long time, have no longer known liberty, as is seen on the continent of Europe, and when the old habits of the nation come to combine suddenly and by a sort of natural attraction with the new habits and doctrines that arise from the social state, all powers seem to rush by themselves toward the center; they accumulate there with a surprising rapidity, and the State all at once attains the extreme limits of its strength, while the individuals allow themselves to fall in a moment to the lowest degree of weakness.

The English who came, three centuries ago, to establish a democratic society in the wilderness of the New World were all accustomed in the mother country to take part in public affairs; they knew the jury; they had freedom of speech and freedom of the press, individual liberty, [added: independent courts], the idea of right and the custom of resorting to it. They carried these

[(a) All centralizing geniuses love war and all warrior minds love centralization.]

6. Democratic origin of the sovereign; people or prince.

≠7. Social state that becomes democratic without absolute monarchy and without free habits, under the aegis and by the favor of the central power.

8. Hatred of the neighbor increased by the aristocratic notion of the neighbor.

9. Difficulty of finding local governments when aristocracy chased away.≠

<10. Centralization increases by itself by *enduring.* Government becomes more capable and individuals more incapable.>

≠11. Little enlightenment in the people, which delivers more and more to the power≠] (*Rubish,* 2).

free institutions and these manly mores to America, and these institutions and mores sustained them against the invasions of the State.

Among the Americans, it is therefore liberty that is old; equality is comparatively new. The opposite happens in Europe where equality, introduced by absolute power and under the eyes of the kings, had already penetrated the habits of the people long before liberty entered their ideas.

I have said that, among democratic peoples, government naturally presented itself to the human mind only under the form of a unique and central power, and that the notion of intermediary powers was not familiar to it. That is particularly applicable to democratic nations that have seen the principle of equality triumph with the aid of a violent revolution. Since the classes that directed local affairs [<served as intermediary between the sovereign and the people>] disappear suddenly in this tempest, and the confused mass that remains still has neither the organization nor the habits that allow it to take in hand the administration of these same affairs, you see nothing except the State itself which can take charge of all the details of government. Centralization becomes in a way a necessary fact.[c]

Napoleon [{the national Convention}][d] must be neither praised nor

c. "In our time a famous sect has appeared that claimed to centralize all the forces of society in the same hands.

"[Further along, on the same page] If someone had spoken to me about the doctrines of the Saint-Simonians without letting me know the time or the country that saw them arise, I dare to affirm that I would have said without fear that they had been born in a democratic century [v: country]" (NOTES OF THE CHAPTER, *Rubish,* 2).

d. Financial centralization, and that one includes all the others, was established in France by the Convention, 5 September 1794, on a report of Cambon who, applying to finances the great principle of the unity and of the indivisibility of France, declared that in the future there would be only one budget, as there was only one State.

The excess of this principle forced it to be abandoned in the year IV and forced departmental budgets to be done.

But since then we have not ceased and still do not cease to remove sums from these budgets in order to carry them over to the budget of the State, that is to say that little by little we return more and more to the financial system created abruptly by the Convention. We see, adds the *Journal des débats,* which provided me with these details (6 March 1838) that the movement of administrative centralization continues, since the budget of the State swells and the departmental budget decreases (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 42).

blamed for having concentrated in his hands alone all administrative powers; for, after the abrupt disappearance of the nobility and of the upper bourgeoisie, these powers came to him by themselves; it would have been as difficult for him to reject them as to take them. [<He must be reproached for the tyrannical use that he often made of his power, rather than for his power.>][e] Such a necessity has never been felt by the Americans, who, not having had a revolution and being from the beginning governed by themselves, have never had to charge the State with temporarily serving them as tutor.[f]

Thus, among a democratic people, centralization develops not only according to the progress of equality, but also according to the manner in which this equality is established.[g]

Tocqueville is referring here to discussions on the law on departmental attributions that had taken place in the Chamber of Deputies in the month of March 1838. The details cited belong to the session of 6 March, reproduced in the *Journal des débats* the next day.

e. In the margin: "≠This sentence is too much because here it is only a matter of administrative centralization.≠"

f. .-.-.- In France, Napoleon was in the matter .-.-[of (ed.)].-.- centralization the accident, but the real and permanent cause was this sudden destruction of the upper {administrative} classes.

Those whose education, wealth, habits and memories naturally enabled them to conduct provincial affairs disappear; and with the confused mass that remained, still not having either enlightenment, or organization, or mores which could allow it to direct these same affairs, to whom would this same concern necessarily revert, if not to the central power? So centralization has been a necessary fact. That is true; the error is to say that it must be an eternal fact.

[To the side] I put a child under my guardianship; is this to say that I must keep him under my rule at manhood? (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

g. The two great disadvantages of centralization are these: 1. In the long run it prevents more undertakings and improvements than it can produce. 2. It delivers all of the social existence to a power that, becoming indolent or tyrannical, can end by plunging the nation into impotence or servitude.

These two dangers are distant and .-.-.-.- disclose even .-.-.-.-

The good that centralization produces, the order, the regularity, the uniformity so adored by democratic peoples, are, on the contrary, noticed and appreciated right away by these same minds.

How would its cause not be popular? (THOUGHTS TO ADD ON THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY DEMOCRATIC IDEAS ON THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT, *Rubish,* 2).

[When conditions have become equal among a nation only following a long and difficult social effort, the sentiments that led to the democratic revolution and those given birth by it subsist for a long time after the revolution. The memory of privileges is joined with the privileges themselves. The trace of former ranks is perpetuated. The people still see the destroyed remnants with hatred and envy, and the nobles envisage the people with terror. You find former adversaries around you on both sides, and you outdo each other throwing yourselves into the arms of the government for fear of falling under the oppression of your neighbors.

This is how the political tendencies that equality imparts are that much stronger among a people as conditions have been more unequal and as equality has had more difficulty becoming established.

The Americans arrived equal on the soil that they occupy. They never had privileges of birth or fortune to destroy. They naturally feel no hatred of some against others. So they subject themselves readily to the administration of those close at hand, because they neither hate nor fear them.][h]

At the beginning of a great democratic revolution, and when the war between the different classes has only begun, the people try hard to centralize public administration in the hands of the government, in order to tear the direction of local affairs away from the aristocracy. Toward the end of this same revolution, on the contrary, it is ordinarily the vanquished aristocracy which attempts to deliver to the State the direction of all [{local}] affairs, because it fears the petty tyranny of the people, who have become its equal and often its master.

Thus, it is not always the same class of citizens that applies itself to increasing the prerogatives of power; but as long as the democratic revolution lasts, a class, powerful by numbers or by wealth, is always found in the nation that is led to centralize the public administration by special passions and particular interests, apart from hatred of the government of the neighbor, which is a general and permanent sentiment among democratic peoples. You can see today that it is the lower classes of England that work

h. This fragment constitutes an independent sheet of the manuscript. Tocqueville's indications allow us to think that it would have been placed here.

with all their strength to destroy local independence and to carry the administration of all points from the circumference to the center, while the upper classes try hard to keep this same administration within its ancient limits. I dare to predict that a day will come when you will see an entirely opposite spectacle.[j]

What precedes makes it well understood why, among a democratic people who has arrived at equality by a long and difficult social effort, the social power must always be stronger and the individual weaker than in a democratic society where, from the beginning, citizens have always been equal. This is what the example of the Americans finally proves.

The men who inhabit the United States have never been separated by any privilege; they have never known the reciprocal relation of inferior and master, and since they do not fear and do not hate one another, they have never known the need to call upon the sovereign to direct the details of their affairs.[k] The destiny of the Americans is singular; they took from the aristocracy of England the idea of individual rights and the taste for local liberties; and they were able to preserve both, because they did not have to combat aristocracy.

If in all times enlightenment is useful to men for defending their in-

j. "When you examine all the laws that .-.-.- in England for the past fifty years and above all during recent years, you will see that all more or less have a tendency toward centralization and uniformity. That is enough for me to conclude that the great democratic revolution that today shapes the world is proceeding constantly among the English people, in spite of the obstacles that oppose it and despite the wealth and the men that the aristocracy still possesses there" (RELATIVE TO THE IDEA OF UNITY IN GENERAL, *Rubish,* 2).

k. On this point the Americans, whatever their errors and their faults, deserve to be praised. They have well earned humanity's gratitude. They have shown that the democratic social state and democratic laws did not have as a necessary result the degeneration of the human race.

I am very content to have found this idea because I believe it correct and because it is the only way to make *America* appear a final time in my last chapters, which really relate only to France.

[To the side] In America the State is a great deal, but the individual is something. Less than in England, but more than in France. He has rights, a strength of individuality less respected than among the English, more than among us (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

dependence, that is above all true in democratic centuries. It is easy, when all men are similar, to establish a unique and omnipotent government; instincts are sufficient. But men need a great deal of intelligence, science and art, in order to organize and to maintain, in the same circumstances, secondary powers, and in order to create, amid the independence and individual weakness of citizens, free associations able to struggle against tyranny without destroying order [{and in order to replace the individual power of a few families with free associations of citizens}].

So concentration of powers and individual servitude will grow, among democratic nations, not only in proportion to equality, but also by reason of ignorance.[m]

It is true that, in centuries less advanced in knowledge, the government often lacks the enlightenment to perfect despotism, as the citizens lack the enlightenment to escape it. But the effect is not equal on the two sides.

However uncivilized a democratic people may be, the central power that directs it is never completely without enlightenment, because it easily attracts what little enlightenment there is in the country, and because, as needed, it goes outside to seek it. So among a nation that is ignorant as well as democratic, a prodigious difference between the intellectual capacity of the sovereign power and that of each one of its subjects cannot fail to manifest itself. The former ends by easily concentrating all powers in its hands.

m. Centralization./

There are two types of decentralization.

One that is in a way instinctive, blind, full of prejudices, devoid of rules, that is born from the desire of small localities to be independent.

There is another one that is reasoned, enlightened, that knows its limits.

These two decentralizations are at the two ends of civilization. In the middle is a central power [that is] energetic, intelligent, that claims [doubtful reading (ed.)] to be able to do everything by itself and that manages, after a fashion, to do so.

Baden, 14 August 1836 (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

The administrative power of the State expands constantly, because only the State is skillful enough to administer.[n]

Aristocratic nations, however little enlightened you suppose them, never present the same spectacle, because enlightenment there is distributed equally between the prince and the principal citizens.

The Pasha who reigns today over Egypt found the population of the country composed of very ignorant and very equal men, and to govern it he appropriated the science and the intelligence of Europe. The particular enlightenment of the sovereign thus coming to combine with the ignorance

n. On accidental causes./

After the place where I show the government as the necessary heir to the old powers when they are suddenly destroyed.

Every time that a great revolution agitates a people, it gives birth within it to a host of new relationships, interests and needs, and you feel on all sides the need for a power that comes to regulate these relationships, guarantee these interests, satisfy these needs. That gives great opportunities to the government that this revolution has established to expand the circle of its action well beyond the old limits and to create a multitude of new attributions that none of the abolished powers had had. That is that much easier for the government because, amid this renewal of all things, the citizens are full of uncertainty, ignorance and fear, not seeing clearly enough.

So when equality is established with the help of and amid a great revolution it happens that the government immediately (two illegible words) its prerogatives not only because of equality of conditions, but also because of the revolution (which makes conditions equal) (YTC, CVj, 2, p. 13).

Page 14 of this same notebook contains an identical fragment.

After this passage, you read:

This includes two ideas:

1. Current existence is more complicated than the life of the former aristocratic societies. Consequently the social power must get involved in more things.

2. Equality is a new fact that puts the individual vis-à-vis the government in a state of uncertainty, ignorance and weakness, which delivers him naturally to the latter. Transitory thing which at this moment plays an immense role (illegible word)./

Another idea of L[ouis (ed.)].

Men without belief give themselves easily to the direction of the power because they are overwhelmed by the weight of their liberty. Man cannot bear independence in all things and the extreme liberty of his mind leads him to curb his actions.

Very debatable truth.

Talk more about all that with L[ouis (ed.)] (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 14–15).

and the democratic weakness of his subjects, the farthest limit of centralization has been attained without difficulty, and the prince has been able to make the country into his factory and the inhabitants into his workers.o

I believe that the extreme centralization of political power ends by enervating society and thus by weakening the government itself in the long run. But I do not deny that a centralized social force is able to execute easily, in a given time and at a determined point, great enterprises.p That is above all true in war, when success depends much more on the ease that you find in bringing all your resources rapidly to a certain point, than even on the extent of those resources. So it is principally in war that peoples feel the desire and often the need to increase the prerogatives of the central power. All warrior geniuses love centralization, which increases their forces, and all centralizing geniuses love war, which obliges nations to draw all powers into the hands of the State. Thus, the democratic tendency which leads

o. "Unity. Centralization./

"Supply myself with an article on Egypt published in the *Revue des deux mondes* of 1 March 1838 and in which someone admires greatly that the Pasha has made himself the proprietor and the unique industrialist of his country, and in which it is implied that something approaching this or analogous could perhaps be tried in France."

"Symptoms of the time" (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

".-.-.- centralization of the Pasha of Egypt which proves that when conditions are once equal, the idea of a central and uniform government presents itself as well in a period of incomplete civilization as in one of advanced civilization. I do not even know if centralization is not rather an idea of medium civilization than of very advanced civilization" (IDEAS TO ADD ON THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY DEMOCRATIC IDEAS ON THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT, *Rubish,* 2).

p. That among democratic nations, above all those that are not commercial, the State must be involved in more *enterprises* than in others./

Nuance to observe in that. If the State itself takes charge of everything, it finishes by throwing individuals into nothingness. If it takes charge of nothing, it is to be feared that it will not be able to emerge from it. Nuances very delicate, difficult to grasp. Position that is very easy to abuse. English system of not getting involved in anything. Aristocratic system. Liberty gives the desire and the idea of doing great things, and individuals powerful enough to do them easily by associating. American system in which the State encourages and does not share in the activities of enterprises, loans money, grants land, does nothing by itself (with the drafts of chapter 5 of the second part, on association in civil life, *Rubish,* 1).

men constantly to multiply the privileges of the State and to limit the rights of individuals is much more rapid and more continuous among democratic peoples who are subject by their position to great and frequent wars, and whose existence can often be put in danger, than among all others.

I have said how the fear of disorder and the love of well-being imperceptibly led democratic peoples to augment the attributions of the central government, the sole power that seems to them by itself strong enough, intelligent enough, stable enough to protect them against anarchy. I hardly need to add that all the particular circumstances that tend to make the state of a democratic society disturbed and precarious increase this general instinct and lead individuals, more and more, to sacrifice their rights to their tranquillity.

So a people is never so disposed to increase the attributions of the central power than when emerging from a long and bloody revolution that, after tearing property from the hands of its former owners, has shaken all beliefs, filled the nation with furious hatreds, opposing interests and conflicting factions. The taste for public tranquillity then becomes a blind passion, and citizens are subject to becoming enamored with a very disordered love of order.

I have just examined several accidents, all of which contribute to aiding the centralization of power. I have not yet spoken about the principal one.

The first of all the accidental causes which, among democratic peoples, can draw the direction of all affairs into the hands of the sovereign is the origin of the sovereign himself and his inclinations.

Men who live in centuries of equality love the central power naturally[q] and willingly expand its privileges; but if it happens that this same

q. *Superior men* who all want to centralize. Accidental cause, the more democracies encounter such men, the more centralized they will become.

All the extraordinary men.

All the extraordinary talents go in this direction. Extraordinary talents in other times are often a cause of restlessness for the people among whom they are found. They create wars, divisions, violence, tyranny. But beyond that, in democracies, they

power faithfully represents their interests and exactly reproduces their instincts, the confidence that they have in it has hardly any limits, and they believe that they are granting to themselves all that they are giving away.[r]

Drawing administrative powers toward the center will always be less easy[s] and less rapid with kings who are still attached at some point to the old aristocratic order than with new princes, self-made men, who seem to be tied indissolubly to the cause of equality by birth, prejudices, instincts and habits. I do not want to say that the princes of aristocratic origin who live in the centuries of democracy do not seek to centralize. I believe that they apply themselves to that as diligently as all the others. For them, the only advantages of equality are in this direction; but their opportunities are fewer, because the citizens, instead of naturally anticipating their desires, often lend themselves to those desires only with difficulty. In democratic societies, centralization will always be that much greater as the sovereign is less aristocratic: there is the rule.

always create centralization, because centralization is an admirable means of action that is clearly conceived and easily obtained only at that time.

I will say as much about all the extraordinary men who come to be born from time to time among these peoples.

All will love centralization and will seek to expand it, and it will be that much greater as they appear in greater number (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 76–77).

r. [In the margin: Ease of succeeding when the power does not give rise to fear about equality./

January 1837.]

What must be done in order to take hold of despotic power among democratic peoples and in the centuries of democratic transition. Ease of turning democratic passions against their goal, to cause liberty to be sacrificed to the blind love of equality and to the *revolutionary* passions that it brings about. To place somewhere toward the end of the volume and perhaps at the end after war (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 56).

s. Variant in the manuscript: ". . . will always be more easy, more rapid and greater among democratic nations that live as a republic than among those that obey a monarch, and under new dynasties than under the old, and it will never meet fewer obstacles than under princes who have emerged from a low position, self-made men, who by their origin, their prejudices, their interests and their habits seem intimately tied to the cause of equality. You can say in a general way that in democratic societies centralization will always be that much greater as the sovereign is less aristocratic."

[I do not believe in the hereditary and imprescriptible rights of princes, and I know how difficult it is to maintain the old families of kings in the midst of new ideas. Ancient dynasties have some particular advantages in centuries of equality, however, that I want to acknowledge.][t]

t. That, before everything, in order for a power to be able to arrive at tyranny among a democratic people, it must have come from the people and must at every occasion flatter the sentiment of equality.

Centralization. Individualism. Material enjoyment./

What precedes opens the way for me.

I want to find out by what condition despotism could establish itself among a democratic people and show how it could use the ideas and the sentiments that arise from equality. To struggle at the same time against the spirit of equality and the spirit of liberty would be folly, but they can be divided. Thus the great problem that the despots of our time and those of the centuries to come will have to have daily in view [interrupted text (ed.)].

From now on, those who will want to create absolute power by aristocracy or aristocracy by absolute power will be great fools, you can affirm it from today.

So what is necessary first for a power [v: government], so that it is possible for it to aspire to tyranny in a longer or shorter time?

I am not afraid to say it, a popular [v: plebeian] origin. It must, by its prejudices, its instincts, its memories, its interests, be intensely favorable to equality. Those are the primary qualities, without which, skill and even genius would be of no use to it to succeed, and with which, vices would be enough.

If it happened that this same man had a bold, brilliant, fertile mind, that he was without restraint in his passions as without limits in his desires, and that he himself naturally shared the democratic inclinations and vices, faults, opinions, which he wanted to use, I do not doubt that he would soon make himself formidable to liberty, and I do not know what the limits of his fortune would be if he added to all of these advantages that of being a bastard [v: if he joined to all of these advantages that of coming from the ranks of the people, his success would be even more probable].

[To the side: Debatable theorem.]

The first concern and the principal affair (of a government or of a man who aims for tyranny) must be to interest the dominant passion of the century in his favor. He can be wasteful, arbitrary, even cruel; it is not sure that he (illegible word) as long as he is not assumed to be aristocratic. But were he the opposite of all these things, he will assuredly perish if it is half-suspected that he is aristocratic. It is possible that in this, favorable circumstances serve him.

If by chance there exists within a democratic people a party, a class, or even a man who in the eyes of the public represents the principle of the inequality of conditions, that is a fortunate accident from which a government that aims for omnipotence must hasten to profit. Let it first exercise its emerging strength on the former; let it do

When an old race of kings directs an aristocracy, since the natural prejudices of the sovereign are in perfect accord with the natural prejudices of the nobles, the vices inherent in aristocratic societies develop freely and find no remedy. The opposite happens when the offshoot of a feudal branch is placed at the head of a democratic people. The prince is inclined each day by his education, his habits and his memories, toward sentiments that inequality of conditions suggests; and the people tend constantly, by its social state, toward the mores to which equality gives birth. So it often happens that the citizens seek to contain the central power, much less as tyrannical than as aristocratic; and that they firmly maintain their independence, not only because they want to be free, but above all because they intend to remain equal. [It is in this sense that you can say that old dynasties lead aristocratic peoples to despotism and democratic nations to liberty.

<It is difficult for such a struggle to last for long without leading to a revolution, but as long as it lasts, you cannot deny that it powerfully serves the political education of the democracy.>]

A revolution that overturns an old family of kings, in order to place new men at the head of a democratic people, can temporarily weaken the central power; but however anarchic it seems at first, you must not hesitate to predict that its final and necessary result will be to expand and to assure the prerogatives of this very power.

against them its apprenticeship for tyranny. It can attempt it without danger. Two great results gained from the same blow. On the one hand, it proves in this way its hatred for aristocracy; {on the other} it accustoms the people to illegality and familiarizes them with arbitrariness and violence. How to suspect a power that emerges from our ranks, that represents us to ourselves, that acts for us and in our name, in the matter that is most in our hearts; that loves what we love, hates what we hate and strikes what we cannot reach? Won't there be time to take precautions when it tries finally to turn against us the weapon that has been entrusted to it? The nation closes its eyes to that and falls asleep.

[With a bracket that includes the last two paragraphs: To delete.]

This reveals the type of utility that a democratic people can draw from ancient dynasties. When an ancient family of kings directs an aristocracy . . . (YTC, CVd, pp. 32–36); you find a draft of this fragment in YTC, CVd, pp. 37–41).

The first, and in a way the only necessary condition for arriving at centralization of the public power in a democratic society is to love equality or make people believe that you do. Thus, the science of despotism, formerly so complicated, is simplified; it is reduced, so to speak, to a unique principle.[u]

u. The manuscript proposes two other conclusions:

> As for me, when I consider the growing weakness of the men of today, their love [v: passion] for equality which increases with their powerlessness, and the type of natural instinct that seems on all sides to carry them without their knowledge toward servitude, I do not dare ask God to inspire in citizens love of liberty, but I beg Him at least to give to the sovereigns [v: princes] who govern them the taste for aristocracy. This would be enough to save human independence.

In another place:

> Last words of section IV./
>
> Moreover, it must very much be believed, liberty, in order to become established and to be maintained, has no less need than despotism to appear as friend of equality. I beg the partisans of liberty to understand it well and to consider that to appear always as a friend of equality, there [is (ed.)] only one sure means worthy of them; it is to be so; it is to attach themselves to equality by the mind if not by the heart.

CHAPTER 5

That among the European Nations of Today the Sovereign Power Increases Although Sovereigns Are Less Stable[a]

If you come to reflect on what precedes, you will be surprised and frightened to see how, in Europe, everything seems to contribute to increasing indefinitely the prerogatives of the central power and each day to make individual existence weaker, more subordinate and more precarious.

The democratic nations of Europe have all the general and permanent tendencies that lead the Americans toward centralization of powers, and moreover they are subject to a multitude of secondary and accidental causes that the Americans do not know. You would say that each step that they take toward equality brings them closer to despotism.

It is enough to look around us and at ourselves to be convinced of it.

During the aristocratic centuries that preceded ours, the sovereigns of Europe had been deprived of or had let go of several of the rights inherent in their power. Not yet one hundred years ago, among most European nations, almost independent individuals or bodies were found that administered justice, called up and maintained soldiers, collected taxes, and often even made or explained the law. Everywhere the State has, for itself alone, taken back these natural attributions of sovereign power; in everything that relates to government, it no longer puts up with an intermediary between it and the citizens, and it directs the citizens by itself in general affairs. I

a. Title in the drafts: THAT CENTRALIZATION IS THE GREATEST DANGER FOR THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONS OF EUROPE (*Rubish,* 2).

am very far[b] from censuring this concentration of power; I am limiting myself to showing it.

In the same period, a great number of secondary powers existed in Europe that represented local interests and administered local affairs. Most of these local authorities have already disappeared; all are tending rapidly to disappear or to fall into the most complete dependency. From one end of Europe to the other, the privileges of lords, the liberties of cities, the provincial administrations are destroyed or are going to be.

Europe has experienced, for a half-century, many revolutions and counter-revolutions that have moved it in opposite directions.[c] But all these movements are similar on one point: all have shaken or destroyed secondary powers. Local privileges that the French nation had not abolished in countries conquered by it have finally succumbed under the efforts of the princes who defeated France. These princes rejected all the novelties that the [French] Revolution had created among them, except centralization. It is the only thing that they have agreed to keep from it.

What I want to note is that all these diverse rights that in our time have been successively taken away from classes, corporations, men, have not served to raise new secondary powers on a more democratic foundation, but have been concentrated on all sides in the hands of the sovereign. Everywhere the State arrives more and more at directing by itself the least citizens and at alone leading each one of them in the least affairs.[1]

b. The manuscript says: "I am far from censuring . . ."

c. "The greatest originality of my chapter is in this idea, still a bit confused, that shows *two revolutions* operating almost in opposite directions. The one that tends to give to the central power a new origin, new tastes, to detach it from aristocracy. . . .

"And the other that constantly increases its prerogatives" (*Rubish,* 2).

1. *This gradual weakening of the individual in the face of society manifests itself in a thousand ways. I will cite among others what relates to wills.*

In aristocratic countries, a profound respect is usually professed for the last will of men. That goes sometimes, among the ancient peoples of Europe, even as far as superstition; the social power, far from hindering the caprices of the dying man, lent its strength to the least of them; it assured him of a perpetual power.[d]

Nearly all the charitable establishments of old Europe were in the hands of individuals or of corporations; they have all more or less fallen into dependence on the sovereign, and in several countries they are governed by the sovereign. It is the State that has undertaken almost alone to give bread to those who are hungry, relief and a refuge to the sick, work to those without it; it has made itself the almost unique repairer of all miseries.

Education, as well as charity, has become a national affair among most of the peoples of today. The State receives and often takes the child from the arms of its mother in order to entrust it to its agents; it is the State that takes charge of inspiring sentiments in each generation and providing each generation with ideas. Uniformity reigns in studies as in all the rest; there diversity, like liberty, disappears each day.

Nor am I afraid to advance that, among nearly all the Christian nations of today, Catholic as well as Protestant, religion is threatened with falling into the hands of the government.[e] It is not that sovereigns show themselves very eager to fix dogma themselves;[f] but more and more they are taking hold of the will of the one who explains dogma; they take away from the cleric his property, assign him a salary, deflect and use for their sole profit the influence that the priest possesses; they make him one of their officials

When all living men are weak, the will of the dead is less respected. A very narrow circle is drawn around it, and if it happens to go outside of it, the sovereign annuls or controls it. In the Middle Ages, the power to make out your will had, so to speak, no limits. Among the French of today, you cannot distribute your patrimony among your children without the State intervening. After having dictated the entire life, it still wants to regulate the final act.

d. "See piece of Beaumont on property in England and above all on the immense place that the last will and testament occupies. 2nd volume of *L'Irlande.*

"Individual power of the man. Very important aristocratic character which manifests itself very strongly in what is related to the will" (with drafts of the chapter that follows, *Rubish,* 2).

e. The manuscript says: "all religions tend to become national."

f. "Ultra-unitary movement of the clergy. Symptoms of the time. Reread Lacordaire./

"Intellectual centralization. Idea of unity which pushed man as far as the last refuges of individual originality" (NOTES OF THE CHAPTER, *Rubish,* 2).

and often one of their servants, and with him they penetrate to the deepest recesses of the soul of each man.[2]

But that is still only one side of the picture.

Not only has the power of the sovereign expanded, as we have just seen, into the entire sphere of old powers; this is no longer enough to satisfy it; it overflows that sphere on all sides and spreads over the domain that until now has been reserved to individual independence. A multitude of actions which formerly escaped entirely from the control of society has been subjected to it today, and their number increases constantly.g

Among aristocratic peoples, the social power usually limited itself to directing and to overseeing citizens in everything that had a direct and visible connection to the national interest; it willingly abandoned them to their free will in everything else. Among these peoples, the government seemed often to forget that there is a point at which the failings and the miseries

2. *As the attributions of the central power augment, the number of officials who represent it increases. They form a nation within each nation and, since the government lends them its stability, they more and more replace the aristocracy among each nation.*

Nearly everywhere in Europe, the sovereign [power] dominates in two ways: it leads one part of the citizens by the fear that they feel for its agents, and the other by the hope that they conceive of becoming those agents.

g. Nothing can delight the imagination of an ambitious man more than the image of a unique power that, with a word, can put an entire people on alert and move it from one place to another. That seems admirable above all in times like ours when we are so impatient to enjoy, and when we want to gain great enjoyments only by means of small efforts.

[To the side: Perhaps move to accidental causes.]

You can predict that nearly all the ambitious and capable minds that a democratic country contains will apply themselves without let-up to expanding the attributions of the social power, because all hope to direct it one day. It is a waste of time to want to demonstrate to those men [that (ed.)] extreme centralization <agglomeration> of powers can harm the State, since they centralize for themselves.

In democratic countries, you find only very honest or very mediocre men who occupy themselves with setting some limits for the central power. The first are rare and the second can do nothing.

In democratic countries, the people are led not only by their tastes to concentrate power, but also by the passions of all the citizens.

[To the side] Perhaps move to accidental causes (*Rubish,* 2). See p. 1293.

of individuals compromise universal well-being, and that sometimes preventing the ruin of an individual must be a public matter.

Democratic nations of our time lean toward an opposite extreme.

It is clear that most of our princes do not want only to direct the whole people; you would say that they consider themselves responsible for the actions and for the individual destiny of their subjects,[h] that they have un-

h. When men all depend more or less on each other, it is enough for the government to lead the principal ones among them in order for the rest to follow.

But when they are all equal and independent, society must in a way be occupied separately with each citizen and guide him.

So it is natural and necessary that the attributions of the government be more numerous and more detailed in a democratic country than in an aristocratic country (IDEAS THAT I CAN HOPE TO USE, *Rubish,* 2).

You find also in a copy of the drafts these two pieces on the same subject:

Centralization./

I have just pointed out in which conditions alone despotism could impose itself on democratic peoples; it remains for me to show the means that it can use.

[To the side: Too didactic.]

I consider a democratic people abstractly from its antecedents, and I conceive that it will always be more difficult to establish a local liberty there than among an aristocratic nation. No one has a visible right to command. No one has leisure, general ideas, enlightenment.

So a long education is always required to make democratic localities able to govern themselves.

But if I consider a democratic people at a certain point of its existence, the difficulty is very much greater.

[To the side: When aristocracy has just been destroyed and when democracy is not yet *trained* and *elevated,* to whom to give the local power?]

Among peoples, some reach democracy by liberal institutions, as the English will do; others by absolute power, as we have done.

This changes the conditions of the problem.

In the first case, when aristocracy loses its power, all its successors are ready to take its place. And even in this case, centralizing tendency. Say a word about the English and show that they are not centralizing with an interest in good administration, but with a democratic interest.

In the second, the sole possible heir to aristocracy is royal power. The only question is knowing if it will always preserve the inheritance (YTC, CVd, pp. 41–42).

Centralization./

Centralization is that much more absurd as the government is more truly representative. When the minister is occupied for six months with attacking and defending

dertaken to lead and to enlighten each one of them in the different acts of his life, and as needed, to make him happy despite himself.[j]

On their side, individuals more and more envisage the social power in the same way; they call it to their aid in all their needs, and at every moment they set their sight on it as on a tutor or on a guide.

I assert that there is no country in Europe in which the public administration has not become not only more centralized, but also more inquisitorial and more detailed; everywhere it penetrates more than formerly into private affairs; it regulates in its own way more actions and smaller actions, and every day it establishes itself more and more beside, around and above each individual in order to assist him, advise him and constrain him.[k]

himself in the chambers, how can he have the time to direct all the provincial interests with which he is charged? The care [illegible word] the responsibility for it comes necessarily to a clerk. Now, what superior guarantee is offered by the wisdom of a clerk compared to that of local magistrates?

4 April 1837 (YTC, CVd, p. 31).

j. Tocqueville seems to refer to the well-known passage of chapter VII of the first book of *Contrat social.* Rousseau, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Pléiade, 1964), III, p. 364.

k. A centralized administration, but slow and fond of red tape and paperwork./

.-.-.- in the session of 2 .-.- March 1838 after praising the administration of m[ines (ed.)] .-.- at the top of his voice, he complained however that its members do not visit, as they ought to do, all the mines that are subject to their inspection and are crushed under all the red tape and paperwork. As if a centralized administration could ever completely meet its program, and as if it was not by its *essence* fond of red tape and paperwork. This last thing above all follows very closely.

From the moment when everything comes from a center, the director of the machine, who can see nothing by himself, but who must know everything, needs to have innumerable accounts sent to him, to *sheck* [*check* (ed.)] one employee by another. In a great centralized administration a hierarchy is needed, that is to say a .-.-.-.- of order and correspondence. Those are the needs. The passions are still much more fond of red tape and paperwork. The permanent inclination of the minister is to want to do everything and to know everything and to order everything, which necessitates still much more correspondence than need does.

And the offices that rule the minister have an interest in drawing everything toward him, which is to say toward them. They have the same passions as the minister does, and they never have, as he does, the political and general point of view that can curb these passions.

So a centralized administration is by its nature slow and fond of writing. It can have great advantages, but this disadvantage is certain./

Formerly, the sovereign lived from the revenue of his lands or from tax income. It is no longer the same today now that his needs have grown with his power. In the same circumstances in which formerly a prince established a new tax, today we resort to a loan. Little by little the State thus becomes the debtor of most of the rich, and it centralizes in its hands the largest capital.[m]

It attracts the smallest capital in another way.

As men mingle and conditions become equal, the poor man has more resources, enlightenment and desires. He conceives the idea of bettering his lot, and he seeks to succeed in doing so by savings. So savings give birth each day to an infinite number of small accumulations of capital, slow and successive fruits of work; they increase constantly. But the greatest number would remain unproductive if they stayed scattered. That has given birth to a new philanthropic institution which will soon become, if I am not mistaken, one of our greatest political institutions. Charitable men conceived the thought of gathering the savings of the poor and utilizing the

The obligation of dealing with all affairs without seeing each other *necessitates* infinite paperwork./

Édouard told me something correct: that fondness for red tape and paperwork was that much greater as the affair was smaller. A great affair is dealt with in Paris. People see each other, come to an understanding, become interested. But in order to understand why a *commune* wants to sell six feet of land, infinite paperwork is required, for people cannot see each other and no one takes an interest (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

Tocqueville is referring to the discussion on the administration of mines which had taken place in the Chamber in March 1838 (see the *Journal des débats* of 21 March 1838). After the floods of the mines of Rive-de-Gier, the government had presented to the Chamber a proposed law in which it required, under penalty of expropriation, the execution of certain measures on the part of the owners of mines in case of danger. The deputies opposed to the proposed law defended the liberty of the owner by relying on article 7 of the law of 21 April 1810, which considered mines as a common property whose conveying and expropriation fell into the domain of the ordinary principles of civil law. See, further on, Tocqueville's note 5.

m. In 1837, Tocqueville had asked Beaumont to bring back to him from England all types of brochures and information on the Scottish savings banks, destined for the drafting of the second part of his *Mémoire sur le paupérisme.* The information gathered by Beaumont confirmed Tocqueville in his fear of a state centralization as regards savings (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, pp. 185, 191, 193, and 196).

earnings. In some countries, these benevolent associations have remained entirely distinct from the State; but in almost all they tend visibly to merge with it, and there are even a few in which the government has replaced them and undertaken the immense task of centralizing the daily savings of several million workers in a single place and of turning those savings to good account by its hands alone.

Thus, the State draws to itself the money of the rich by borrowing, and by savings banks it disposes as it wills of the pennies of the poor. The wealth of the country rushes constantly toward it and into its hand; wealth accumulates there all the more as equality of conditions becomes greater [{the country is more democratic}]; for among a democratic nation, only the State inspires confidence with individuals, because only it alone seems to them to have some strength and some duration.[3]

Thus, the sovereign power does not limit itself to directing public fortune; it also gets into private fortunes;[n] it is the leader of each citizen and often his master, and moreover, it becomes his steward and his cashier.

Not only does the central power alone fill the entire sphere of old powers, expand and go beyond it, but it moves there with more agility, strength and independence than it ever did formerly.

All the governments of Europe have in our time prodigiously perfected administrative science;[o] they do more things, and they do each thing with

3. *On the one hand, the taste for well-being augments constantly, and the government takes hold more and more of all the sources of well-being.*

So men go by two diverse paths toward servitude. The taste for well-being turns them away from getting involved in the government, and the love of well-being makes them more and more narrowly dependent on those who govern.

n. "Opinion of Michel de Bourges (23 March 1838) to ponder: I seem here to want to strengthen beyond measure the principle of property which according to my political principles is always defended strongly enough. That leads to reflection because it seems that all the men of today, whatever their origin and point of departure, royalists and republicans, democrats or fiery enemies of democracy, unite in the principle of unity, and from there run in common toward servitude" (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2). It probably concerns an extract from the debate on mines to which note 5 of p. 1234 refers.

o. This theory, so vaunted, so accepted today, and now self-sustaining [word fragment], of the exact division of judicial and administrative powers must be examined once and for all, head on and very closely. This theory is spoken about only with

more order, rapidity and with less expense; they seem to enrich themselves constantly with all the enlightenment which they have taken from individuals. Each day the princes of Europe hold their delegated agents in a more narrow dependence, and they invent new methods to direct them more closely and to oversee them with less difficulty. It is not enough for them to conduct all affairs by their agents; they undertake to direct the conduct of their agents in all their affairs; so that the public administration depends not only on the same power, it draws itself more and more into the same place and becomes concentrated in fewer hands. The government centralizes its actions at the same time that it increases its prerogatives: double cause of strength.

When you examine the constitution that the judicial power formerly had among most of the nations of Europe, two things are striking: the independence of this power and the extent of its attributions.

Not only did the courts of justice decide nearly all the quarrels among individuals; in a great number of cases, they served as arbiters between each individual and the State.

respect; it is the holy ark. Let us pierce this covering; let us dare to discuss what is believed as a religion; let us see the naked truth and face to face.

That it is true in a general way that judicial and administrative powers must be distinct is incontestable.

But is it important for the salvation of the State and for good administration that the judicial system and the executive power are never combined in the same acts? That is what I do not believe. You start from a good principle, but you push it to the absurd. The intervention of the judicial power in the acts of the administrative power seems to me often useful and sometimes so necessary that I do not imagine liberty possible without that.

Perhaps this question must be gone into more deeply by me here, but beyond that, it merits a particular, detailed, practical examination on my part for France. This must be for me one of the first works after this book. For I believe that the principal hazard for the future is there. It is incontestable that the administrative power is *inevitably* called to play a more important and more multifarious role in the centuries which begin than previously.

[In the margin: the *Conseil d'État* is something, but not enough, and it would be nothing without liberty of the press.]

The entire question is to know if you can combine the guarantees of liberty with the necessary action of administrative power.

You cannot stop the development of this power, but you can give it some counterbalances/ (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

I do not want to speak here about the administrative and political attributions that the courts had usurped in some countries, but about the judicial attributions that they possessed in all. Among all the peoples of Europe, there were and there still are many individual rights, most related to the general right of property, which were placed under the safeguard of the judge and which the State could not violate without the permission of the former.

It is this semi-political power which principally distinguished the courts of Europe from all the others; for all peoples have had judges, but all have not given judges the same privileges.

If we now examine what is happening among the democratic nations of Europe which are called free, as well as among the others, we see that on all sides, alongside these courts, other more dependent ones are being created, whose particular purpose is to decide in exceptional instances the litigious questions that can arise between the public administration and the citizens. The old judicial power is left with its independence, but its jurisdiction is narrowed, and more and more the tendency is to make it only an arbiter between particular interests.p

p. Two tendencies to distinguish:

1. One that tends to concentrate all powers in the State.
2. The other that tends to concentrate the exercise of all powers in the executive./

Tendency to free the administrative power from all judicial control./

Among all peoples the judicial power appears as the support for individual independence, and everywhere that its attributions decrease, the existence of the individual [v: of particulars] becomes precarious.

It is from there, I believe, that the question must be engaged. There is today a clear tendency to rid the sovereign power of the judge (*Rubish,* 2).

In another jacket:

French centralizers use the word *State* in a peculiar way. Often this difference alone separates us.

The State, they say, in the century in which we are and in those into which we are entering, must get involved in many things. Agreed. But by *State* they almost always mean the *executive* power alone, acting without the cooperation or the guarantee of the legislative and judicial powers. It is here that we no longer agree.

The State must indeed have great prerogatives among democratic peoples, but the executive power must not exercise them alone and without control, in order for liberty to be saved and for the individual not to disappear entirely before the social power.

The number of these special courts increases constantly, and their attributions grow. So the government escapes more every day from the obligation to have its will and its rights sanctioned by another power. Not able to do without judges, it wants, at least, to choose its judges itself and to hold them always in its hand; that is to say, between it and individuals, it places still more the image of justice rather than justice itself.[q]

Thus, it is not enough for the State to draw all affairs to itself; it also ends more and more by deciding all of these by itself without control and without recourse.[4]

There is among the modern nations of Europe one great cause that, apart from all those that I have just pointed out, contributes constantly to expand the action of the sovereign power or to augment its prerogatives; we have not taken enough notice of it. This cause is the development of industry, which the progress of equality favors.[r]

[To the side: You see without fear the government increase its *civil* privileges, as if it were not on the latter that political influence sooner or later rests. I would believe the future of liberty more assured with a government that would have many political rights and few civil rights than with a government that would have few political rights and many civil rights.

Civil rights means nothing. The word escapes me, but the thought is there] (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2). See note d of p. 1223.

q. The manuscript says: ". . . but not justice itself."

4. *On this subject in France there is a strange sophism. When a trial between the administration and an individual arises, we refuse to submit its examination to an ordinary judge, in order it is said, not to mix administrative power and judicial power. As if it were not mixing these two powers and mixing them in the most dangerous and most tyrannical fashion to clothe the government with the right to judge and to administer at the same time.*

r. 1. General reasons that cause the progress of industry to make the central power progress:

1. Nature of the property and of the industrial class that most naturally occupies the government.

2. Creation of new goods and persons.

2. Particular and European reasons:

1. Ancient prejudice against the property and the class.

Facts that support these arguments (*Rubish,* 2).

[<The goods created by industry are rightly regarded by all enlightened nations as particularly appropriate to be taxed. Thus, as industry develops, you see new taxes arise, and these taxes are in general more complicated, more difficult and more exacting to collect than all the others.[s]

It must be remarked on the other hand that . . .>][t]

Industry usually gathers a multitude of men in the same place; it establishes new and complicated relationships among them. It exposes them to great and sudden shifts between abundance and poverty, during which public tranquillity is threatened. It can happen finally that these works compromise the health and even the lives of those who profit from them or of those who devote themselves to them. Thus, the industrial class has more need to be regulated, supervised and restrained than all the other classes, and it is natural that the attributions of the government grow with it.

This truth is generally applicable; but here is what relates more particularly to the nations of Europe.

In the centuries that have preceded those in which we live, the aristocracy possessed the land and was able to defend it. So landed property was surrounded by guarantees, and its owners enjoyed a great independence. That created laws and habits that have been perpetuated despite the division of lands and the ruin of the nobles; and today the landowners and farmers are still, of all citizens, those who escape most easily from the control of the social power.

In these same aristocratic centuries, where all the sources of our history are found, personal property had little importance and its owners were despised and weak; the industrialists formed an exceptional class in the middle of the aristocratic world. Since they did not have assured patronage, they were not protected, and often they were not able to protect themselves.[u]

s. "Perhaps be infinitely more rapid in this piece. Tell the facts without explaining them. They are present to the readers because they are French facts" (*Rubish,* 2).

t. In the margin: "<All this applies only to indirect taxes, and indirect taxes do not strike only industrial products. The thought is therefore obscure and partly false.>"

u. "As industry develops you see growing with it a class of men who live only on the

So it became a habit to consider industrial property as a property of a particular nature, which did not merit the same guarantees as property in general, and to consider the industrialists as a small, separate class in the social order, whose independence had little value, and as a class that it was fitting to abandon to the regulatory passion of princes. If, in fact, you open the codes of the Middle Ages, you are astonished to see how, in these centuries of individual independence, industry was constantly regulated by kings, up to the smallest details; on this point, centralization is as active and as detailed as it could be.

Since this time, a great revolution has taken place in the world; industrial property, which was only in germ, has developed; it covers Europe; the industrial[v] class has expanded; it has enriched itself from the remnants of all the others; it has grown in number, in importance, in wealth; it grows constantly; nearly all those who are not part of it are connected to it, at least at some point; after having been the exceptional class, it threatens to become the principal class and, so to speak, the sole class;[w] but the political ideas and habits to which it formerly gave birth have remained. These ideas and these habits have not changed, because they are old, and then because they are in perfect harmony with the new ideas and general habits of the men of our times.[x]

salary of every day and who can only find in the accumulation of salary the means to conquer their independence and to change their lot little by little. This class has always existed in the world, but its development is new. It is already numerous; it threatens to become innumerable" (*Rubish,* 2).

v. "I believe that *industrialist* must be understood as every man who gains money by the aid of a mechanical art, such as iron worker, carpenter, and finally manufacturer.

"I do not believe that merchants, who only buy and sell, can be put in the number of industrialists.

"[To the side: What do I mean by industrial property?

"You see clearly what an industrialist is, but what is an industrial property?]

"Farmers are certainly not there and, with more reason, tenant farmers" (*Rubish,* 2).

w. In the margin: "<The democratic class par excellence.>"

x. "<To govern the men of our times, new vices and new virtues are needed>" (*Rubish,* 2).

So industrial property does not augment its rights with its importance. The industrial class does not become less dependent by becoming more numerous; but you would say, on the contrary, that it carries despotism within it, and that despotism expands naturally as it develops.[5]

And in another place: "Ideas to keep, to treat, but I do not know where and how to make them enter into my classifications./

"What astonishes me in man is not so much the weakness that he exhibits against a multitude of natural enemies, as the manner in which he obeys a kind of invisible power that hides in himself."

[In the margin:

To put *perhaps* in the place where I will be able to depict the incessant though somewhat thwarted march of the modern world.]

There are centuries when men are always led toward the same points, from whatever direction they are pushed and wherever they seem to want to go. You see them one moment rush forward along an opposite path, and when they have broken all the barriers that were set against them and that they can breach, they stop by themselves and retrace their steps.

Sometimes a government wants to compel them to adopt certain opinions and certain customs. They shudder and resist. And when they have triumphed over their masters, they do alone what someone wanted to prescribe for them; and they succumb to a hidden force within their own breast that acts without their knowing.

There are times when great virtues or great talents are necessary in order to act upon a people and to dominate it; there are others when great vices suffice almost alone.

In order to act upon an honest people and dominate it, great virtues or great talents are necessary. In order to produce the same effect on a corrupt nation, great vices can suffice (YTC, CVa, pp. 33–34).

5. *I will cite a few facts in support of this. It is in the mines that the natural sources of industrial wealth are found. As industry developed in Europe, as the product of the mines became a more general interest and their good exploitation more difficult because of the division of property that equality brought, most sovereigns claimed the right to own the resources of the mines and to oversee the work; this had not been seen for properties of another type.*

The mines, which were individual properties subject to the same obligations and provided with the same guarantees as other landed property, thus fell into the public domain. It is the State that exploits them or that grants concessions; owners are transformed into users; they hold their rights from the State and, moreover, the State almost everywhere claims the power to direct them; it draws up rules for them, imposes methods on them, subjects them to a habitual surveillance, and if they resist, an administrative court dispossesses them; and the public ad-

ministration transfers their privileges to others; so that the government possesses not only the mines, it holds all the miners in its hand.

As industry develops, however, the exploitation of old mines increases. New ones are opened. The population of the mines spreads and grows larger. Every day, the sovereigns expand their domain under our feet and populate it with their servants.[y]

y. Unity, centralization, administrative despotism./

Discussion relative to the mines of Gier (2 .-.- March 1838) have just suggested to me.—[the (ed.)].—following ideas:

The new world will see *industrial property* augment incessantly. That is indeed the new property par excellence, the democratic property.

Now, I see clearly the means by which the government takes hold of the direction and of the *management* of this property and in this way augments its influence in proportion as this property develops. It does not lack pretexts and even reasons for that.

[In the margin: Begin by showing how the government itself will become a great industrialist, will do immense enterprises in industry, at the same time that it becomes the master and the director of all the other industrialists. It attracts all the industrial capital by great enterprises and by centralized savings banks.]

The first reason is that this type of property, just coming into existence so to speak, is [not (ed.)] defended like all the others by an old respect for custom and allows itself to be regulated much more.

But there are reasons of detail of which I am going to detail a few. Coal, iron and minerals in general are the great sources of commercial wealth. These riches were formerly patrimonial. The top carried ownership of the bottom. The government, putting forward this plausible enough reason that such riches are more national than individual, dispossesses the one who holds them, unless he exploits them, and grants them to others (decree of 1810). Great abuses have taken place since in the practice of concession. The government claims to oblige the new owners, who are nothing more in its eyes than concessionaires, to exploit as it wants, to do the work that it indicates, or it takes back the concession and gives it to another.[1] All this immense population that owns or exploits the mines, a population constantly growing in number and above all in importance, becomes by a single deed composed of administrative *agents* and nothing more. The government not owning the mines, but the miners.

1. [All that will be appropriate, and even just, if the judicial power were introduced there. Its absence causes the whole evil. The principle of the absolute and continuous division of the administrative and judicial power is irreconcilable with the *liberty* and the *prosperity* of the State. If the administration does not get involved in this commercial property, public prosperity is in danger; and liberty, if it alone is involved in it. The problem to resolve is to unite them.]

Other example. The owners of land along the river do not agree on what to do to guarantee the banks of the river. The government forces them to associate in order to do the necessary work in common. Nothing better. But it directs the association

and forces it to save the land. So it has all the riverside residents in its hands. But that gets away from commercial property which I want .-.-.-

[In the margin: Bonaparte said in 1810 concerning .-.-.- by dint of multiplying the obstacles, you make France take big steps toward tyranny. That you saw a prefect prevent the building of a house because the owner refused to .-.-.- his plan. It was only a matter of the rules of the .-.-.- He added: the concessionaire must only be despoiled of his property when he himself agrees to cede it. There is no difference from this perspective between a mine and a farm. Napoleon does not deny that the concessionaire be subjected to conditions, he only wants the non-compliance with these conditions not to carry the loss of the concession. Courts will sentence, he says, the concessionaire to executing them, as is practiced in regard to other contracts.]

.-.-.-.-.-.- there are immense commercial enterprises that in civilized countries cannot be carried out without the authorization of the social power, administration or legislature. Such particularly are the great works that necessitate the destruction of particular properties and that must respond to a public need, such as toll road, canal, bridge, port. . . . This gives an opening to the same argument as for the mines. The State, having granted concessions, claims to have the right to direct and, if someone does [not (ed.)] obey its directives, to dispossess. And among the social powers, it is the administration alone that claims the right in order not to mix legislative and administrative powers, and it wants to do it alone in order not to mix the administrative and judicial powers.

In England it is Parliament that authorizes. See in the work of Simon the charter of the railroad of Birmingham.

So that apart from the canals, roads, bridges that it owns, builds or directs by its agents, it is master of those who own, make or direct all the others.

Third example.

Among democratic peoples all commercial enterprises of some value can be carried out only by associations, but association is a means of which you .- .- to abuse. A collective owner is a new being that merits less consideration than individual owners who have been known since the beginning of the world and that at the same time is more frightening because it is more powerful. Under the pretext of gathering capital for a useful enterprise, the credulity of the public is misled, and capital is amassed in order to turn it to the profit of the inventor of the project. Society must be protected against such a trap. The remedy is to charge the administration with examining in advance the bases of the association and to grant or to refuse the right to associate, which puts in the hands of the government the most active passions and the most energetic needs of future generations. For, I repeat, commercial property is called to become the first and the most important of all.

I go further and I would be very .-.-.-.- not a step further, and if after having obtained the right to authorize .-.-.- association, you soon asked me for the right to direct them, if not in all cases, at least in a great number, with the threat of withdrawing the authorization for associating in case of refusal. So that after having put

In proportion as the nation becomes more industrial, it feels a greater need for roads, canals, ports and other works of a semi-public nature, which facilitate the acquisition of wealth; and in proportion as the nation is more democratic, individuals experience more difficulty in executing such works, and the State more ease in doing them. I am not afraid to assert that the manifest tendency of all the sovereigns of our time is to undertake alone the execution of such enterprises; in that way, they enclose populations each day within a more narrow dependence.

On the other hand, as the power of the State increases and as its needs augment, the State itself consumes an always greater quantity of industrial products, which it fabricates ordinarily in its arsenals and its factories. In this way, in each kingdom, the sovereign power becomes the greatest industrialist;[z] it draws to and retains in its service a prodigious number of engineers, architects, mechanics and artisans.[a]

in its hands all those who have the desire to associate, you would also put there all those who have associated, that is to say, nearly the entire society in democratic centuries.

You would leave free only non-commercial property, which every day loses its importance, and individual commercial property, which cannot have any importance among democratic nations.

Again, if you reached the owners of this latter by a thousand regulations .-.-.- of public utility that the administration promulgates, interprets and applies alone without recourse [variant: in the name of order, of the healthiness of morals, of tranquillity, of public prosperity or in the interest of even those you coerce]" (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

During his journey to England in 1835, Tocqueville already remarked: "The necessity of introducing the judicial power into the administration is one of these *central* ideas to which I am led by all my research about what has allowed and can allow men to have political liberty" (*Voyage en Angleterre, OC,* V, 2, p. 68).

The idea is found again in *L'Ancien régime et la Révolution.* In chapter 4 of the second book (*OC,* II, 1, p. 125), after having spoken about the number of special courts and of the judicial rights of the *intendant,* he concluded: "The intervention of the judicial system in the administration harms only affairs, while the intervention of the administration in the judicial system depraves men and tends to make them at the very same time revolutionary and servile."

z. "Double movement:

"The government draws closer to industry and takes hold of the smallest industrialists.

"Private industry becomes bigger and enters into the sphere of power./

"And the government descends into the sphere of private industry" (*Rubish,* 2).

a. *"Equality* is the great fact of our time.

It is not only the first of industrialists; it tends more and more to make itself the leader or rather the master of all the others.[b]

Since citizens have become weak while becoming more equal,[c] they can do nothing in industry without associating; now, the public power naturally wants to place these associations under its control.

It must be recognized that these kinds of collective beings, which are called associations, are stronger and more formidable than a simple individual can be, and that they have less responsibility than the latter for their own actions; the result is that it seems reasonable to allow to each one of them less independence from the social power than would be allowed for an individual.

Sovereigns have that much more inclination to act in this way since it suits their tastes. Among democratic peoples it is only by association that

"Industrial *development* the second.

"Both augment the power of the government, or rather both are only one" (*Rubish,* 2).

b. Yesterday (26 February 1836) I met M. Polonceau. I had a very interesting conversation with him.

He spent twenty years in the administration of bridges and roads, was chief engineer there, and has more or less retired since that time. He is an active, innovative, perhaps imprudent spirit, which the *esprit de corps* could not tame. He perhaps speaks with animosity about the administration of which he was part, but he says very interesting and, I believe, generally very true things, about the taste of this administration for established things, principally established by it, about its efforts to impede everything that does not come from it, about its determination not to adopt fixed rules that would limit it, about its interminable delays, its expensive habits, its preferences, its little taste for publicity.

He told me that to know its organization and to appreciate its spirit I must study:

1. The decree of organization given in 1811.
2. The collection of annual reports on bridges and roads (YTC, CVa, pp. 57–58).

c. In the manuscript:

. . . more equal, they are obliged to unite together constantly even for industrial works of an entirely private nature. Industry cannot fail to develop in a democratic country without giving birth to an infinite number of associations. ≠These associations are so many new persons whose rights have not yet been well established and who enter into the world at a period when the idea of the rights of individuals is weak and that of the sovereign very extensive. You have a great facility≠ and these associations fall naturally under the control of the public power.

the resistance of citizens to the central power can come about; consequently the latter never sees associations that are not under its control except with disfavor; and what is very worth noting is that, among democratic peoples, citizens often envisage these same associations, which they need so much, with a secret sentiment of fear and jealousy which prevents them from defending them. The power and the duration of these small particular societies, amid the general weakness and instability, astonishes them and worries them, and citizens are not far from considering as dangerous privileges the free use that each association makes of its natural powers.

All these associations that are arising today are, moreover, so many new persons, for whom time has not consecrated rights and who enter into the world at a period when the idea of particular rights is weak, and when the social power is without limits; it is not surprising that associations lose their liberty at birth.

Among all the peoples of Europe, there are certain associations that can be formed only after the State has examined their statutes and authorized their existence. Among several, efforts are being made to extend this rule to all associations. You see easily where the success of such an undertaking would lead.

If the sovereign power had once the general right to authorize, on certain conditions, associations of all types, it would not take long to claim that of overseeing them and of directing them, so that the associations would not able to evade the rule that it had imposed on them. In this way, the State, after making all those who desire to associate dependent on it, would make all those who have associated dependent as well, that is to say, nearly all the men who are alive today.

The sovereign powers thus appropriate more and more, and put to their use the greatest part of this new force that industry creates today in the world. Industry leads us, and they lead industry.[d]

d. What happened at the end of the 1837 session for railroads, and the way in which nearly everyone fell into agreement that the government must take charge of everything, is characteristic and shows clearly the slope that carries us, friends and enemies of liberty, toward the centralization of all powers in the hands of the government and the introduction of its hand into all affairs.

Those men are very foolish to believe that while giving a government immense *civil* attributions, they will easily put fetters on it in the field of politics, and to think that a man {charged} with handling by himself alone all the financial resources of a great people, with putting millions of workers into motion, with executing works of all types upon which national prosperity and life are based, will not be master of all the rest when he wants to be.

This 30 June 1837.

The language of the newspaper the *Siècle* has for a month been characteristic because this newspaper is conspicuously in the hands of Odilon Barrot and of the liberal and democratic opposition of the left.

If it is a matter of public works in general, it wants the government to take charge of them alone, to dragoon masses of workers, to bring them sometimes from one side, sometimes from another.

As for the railroads in particular, the government must above all take charge of them, for such an undertaking would give too much power to individuals and would grant them immense privileges. Moreover, it would be necessary to grant different concessions, so that the great French unity and uniformity would not be altered.

There is nothing, including the mines, that, according to the *Siècle* (27 June 1837), the government must not exploit. *Why,* it says, *would the State not claim the exploitation of the underground domain, instead of conceding it freely to the privileged?*

Do you see how democratic passions adapt here marvelously well to the increases of central power and how democratic instincts and prejudices go complacently before tyranny provided that unity and equality are sheltered?/

I cannot prevent myself from admiring the simplicity of those who believe that you can without disadvantage increase the civil rights of the government provided that you do not increase its political power, as if . . . [interrupted text (ed.)] (Fragment on writing paper, UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

In the same jacket you also find these explanations:

Ideas relative to centralization, to blend into the final chapter./

M. Thiers said to me today (27 May 1837) regarding the commission for the railroad from Lyon to Marseille that he had ended by convincing *all* the members of the commission that great public works must always be done in France at State *expense* and by its agents.

Do not forget that when I speak about the ultra-centralizing tendency of our times" (YTC, CVd, p. 30).

M. Thiers, in the session of .-.-.- January 1838, said (see *Siècle* of that day).

Without doubt Spain did not enter into the c.-.- of 92 and 93. Spain did not build scaffolds as in France; the terror was what it could be in the peninsula, in a country without centralization, without unity. So no scaffold, but the cutting of throats.

The comment is good, to keep (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

[As for those who still work alone in the industrial world, their number and above all their importance is constantly decreasing; and for a long time, moreover, the government has exercised the right to regulate them as it pleases and has imposed on them each day new laws of which the government itself alone is the administrator and the interpreter.

<≠Perhaps you will find that I have expanded too much on this last part. Its importance will be my excuse.

The progress of equality and the development of industry are the two greatest facts of our times.

I wanted to show how both contributed to enlarge the sphere of the central power and to restrict individual independence each day within the narrowest limits.≠>][e]

I attach so much importance to all that I have just said that I am tormented with the fear of having detracted from my thought by wanting to make it clearer.

So if the reader finds that the examples cited to support my words are insufficient or badly chosen; if he thinks that in some place I have exaggerated the progress of the social power, and that on the contrary I have limited beyond measure the sphere in which individual independence still moves, I beg him to abandon the book for a moment and to consider in his turn by himself the matters that I have undertaken to show him. Let him examine attentively what is happening each day among us and beyond us; let him question his neighbors; let him finally consider himself; I am very much mistaken if he does not arrive, without a guide and by other paths, at the point where I wanted to lead him.

[He will discover that the various rights that today have been successively wrested from classes, corporations, men, instead of serving to raise new secondary powers on another more democratic foundation, have almost all collected in the sole hands of the sovereign, that everywhere the public administration has become more clever, more intelligent and stronger, that the individual has become more isolated, more inexperienced, and weaker relative to the public administration, and that finally the State, whatever

e. In the margin: "<≠These two facts are closely related to each other, for it is enough to enlighten equal men for them to tend all by themselves toward industry.≠>"

its representative, has placed itself more every day next to and above each citizen in order to instruct him, guide him, aid him and constrain him.][f]

He will notice that, during the half-century that has just gone by, centralization has grown everywhere in a thousand different fashions. Wars, revolutions, conquests have served its development; all men have worked to increase it.[g] During this same period, when men have with a prodigious rapidity succeeded each other at the head of affairs, their ideas, their interests, their passions have varied infinitely; but all have wanted to centralize in some ways. The instinct for centralization has been like the sole immobile point amid the singular mobility of their existence and their thoughts.[h]

And when the reader, after examining this detail of human affairs, will want to embrace the vast picture as a whole, he will remain astonished.

On the one hand, the firmest dynasties are shaken or destroyed; on all sides peoples escape violently from the dominion of their laws; they destroy

f. To the side: "<This said above. Is it better there?>"

g. It concentrates in its hand great public functions that were wrongly separated from it, such as the preparation of all types of general laws,
customs,
the collection of taxes,
the central direction of the judicial system,
the army, the police,
the direction of great local affairs that by their greatness have a general interest,
the supervision of all [interrupted text (ed.)] (*Rubish,* 2).

h. ≠To uphold the individual in the face of the social power whatever it is, to preserve for him something of his independence, of his strength, of his originality, such must be the continual effort of all the friends of humanity in democratic centuries. Just as in democratic [aristocratic (ed.)] centuries, it was necessary to magnify society and to reduce the individual.
Were I alone in saying that, I would not remain silent.≠
[To the side: This must go in the peroration of section V.
Question of dynasty, secondary question.]
Centralization must grow constantly because it results from instincts that do not change. Men succeed each other in power; their passions, their interests, their ideas vary; but all, either voluntarily or involuntarily, centralize, because by centralizing, they obey, without knowing it, an instinct that is immobile. Amid the singular mobility of their thoughts and of their existence, it is the only permanent and durable thing that is in power today.
[In the margin] 27 February 1838 (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 41–42).

or limit the authority of their lords or of their princes; all the nations that are not in revolution seem at least restless and unsettled; the same spirit of revolt animates them. And, on the other, in this same time of anarchy and among these same peoples so unruly, the social power constantly increases its prerogatives; it becomes more centralized, more enterprising, more absolute, more extensive. The citizens fall under the control of the public administration at every instant; they are carried imperceptibly and as if without their knowledge to sacrifice to the public administration some new parts of their individual independence, and these same men who from time to time overturn a throne and trample kings underfoot, bow more and more, without resistance, to the slightest will of a clerk.

So therefore, two revolutions seem to be taking place today in opposite directions: one continually weakens power, and the other constantly reinforces it. In no other period of our history has it appeared either so weak or so strong.

But when you finally come to consider the state of the world more closely, you see that these two revolutions are intimately linked to each other, that they come from the same source, and that, after having had a different course, they finally lead men to the same place.

I will not be afraid again to repeat one last time what I have already said or pointed out in several places of this book. We must be very careful about confusing the very fact of equality with the revolution that finally introduces it into the social state and into the laws; that is the reason for nearly all the phenomena that astonish us.

All the ancient political powers of Europe, the greatest as well as the least, were established in the centuries of aristocracy, and they more or less represented or defended the principle of inequality and of privilege. To make the new needs and interests suggested by growing equality prevail in the government, it was therefore necessary for the men of our times to overturn or restrain the ancient powers. That has led them to make revolutions and has inspired in a great number of them this wild taste for disorder and for independence to which all revolutions, whatever their objective, always give birth.

I do not believe that there is a single country in Europe where the development of equality has not been preceded or followed by some violent

changes in the state of property and of persons, and almost all these changes have been accompanied by a great deal of anarchy and license, because they were done by the least civilized portion of the nation against the portion that was most civilized.

From that have come the two opposite tendencies that I previously showed. As long as the democratic revolution was in its heat, the men occupied with destroying the ancient aristocratic powers that fought against it appeared animated by a great spirit of independence; and as the victory of equality became more complete, they abandoned themselves little by little to the natural instincts that arose from this same equality, and they reinforced and centralized the social power. They had wanted to be free in order to be able to make themselves equal; and as equality became more established with the help of liberty, it made liberty more difficult for them.

These two states have not always been successive. Our fathers have shown how a people could organize an immense tyranny within itself at the very moment when it escaped from the authority of the nobles and braved the power of all the kings, teaching the world at the same time the way to conquer its independence and to lose it.

The men of today notice that the old powers are collapsing on all sides; they see all the old influences dying, all the old barriers falling; that disturbs the judgment of the most able; they pay attention only to the prodigious revolution which is taking place before their eyes, and they believe that humanity is going to fall forever into anarchy. If they considered the final consequences of this revolution, they would perhaps imagine other fears.

As for me, I do not trust, I confess, the spirit of liberty which seems to animate my contemporaries; I see well that the nations of today are turbulent; but I do not find clearly that they are liberal, and I am afraid that at the end of these agitations, which make all thrones totter, sovereigns will find themselves stronger than they were [I am afraid finally that in this century of license, everything is being prepared for the enslavement of the generations to come].

CHAPTER 6

What Type of Despotism Democratic Nations Have to Fear[a]

I had noticed during my stay in the United States that a democratic social state similar to that of the Americans could offer singular opportunities for the establishment of despotism,[b] and I had seen on my return to Europe how most of our princes had already made use of the ideas, sentiments and

a. What the character of military despotism would be if it came to be established among a democratic people.

Idea to treat either at *military spirit* or at *administrative despotism.* Probably at the first. To blend into a chapter rather than to treat separately.

I see two places for this.

1. The first is after what I said about the turbulent spirit of the army, about its habitual discontent, about the place that it occupies in society. I could show these sentiments leading the army to seize the government. I would then say in what spirit it would govern.

2. Here is the second place: after painting administrative despotism, I could ask myself if it would not be changed for the worse by its combination with military government (something possible). I would prove that things would hardly be worse. I would then pass to the combination of this same despotism with sovereignty of the people and I would prove that things would hardly be better.

3. Finally couldn't I place this idea separately (illegible word)? (YTC, CVj, 2, pp. 9–10).

b. *"Despotism,* tyrannical, arbitrary and absolute government of only one man (or of only one power must be added).

"The principle of despotic States is that only one man governs there entirely according to his will, having absolutely no other laws than that of his caprices. *Encyclopédie.* This was written before we had seen the despotism of an assembly under the Republic."

In another place in the *rubish:* "This word *despotism* is unfortunate because its old meaning does not exactly correspond to the new meaning that I want to give it" (*Rubish,* 2).

needs that arose from that social state, in order to expand the circle of their power.

That led me to believe that Christian nations would end perhaps by suffering some oppression similar to that which weighed formerly on several of the peoples of antiquity.[c]

A more detailed examination of the subject and five years of new meditations have not lessened my fears, but they have changed their object.

We have never in past centuries seen a sovereign so absolute and so powerful that he undertook to administer by himself, and without the help of secondary powers, all the parts of a great empire; there is none who attempted to subject all his subjects indiscriminately to the details of a uniform rule, or who descended to the side of each one of his subjects in order to rule over him and to lead him. The idea of such an undertaking had never occurred to the human mind, and if a man ever happened to imagine it, the insufficiency of enlightenment, the imperfection of administrative procedures, and above all the natural obstacles that inequality of conditions created would have soon stopped him in the execution of such a vast design.

We see that in the time of the greatest power of the Caesars, the different peoples who inhabited the Roman world had still kept diverse customs and mores. Although subjected to the same monarch, most of the provinces were administered separately; they were full of powerful and active municipalities, and although all the government of the empire was concentrated in the hands of the emperor alone, and although he remained always, as needed, the arbiter of all things, the details of social life and of individual existence ordinarily escaped his control.

The emperors possessed, it is true, an immense power without counterbalance, which allowed them to give themselves freely to their bizarre inclinations and to use the entire strength of the State to satisfy them; they

c. To the side: "<Perhaps place this here:

"Those, I said, who think to rediscover the monarchy of H[enri (ed.)]. IV or L[ouis (ed.)]. XIV seem very blind to me. As for me, when I consider the state which several European nations have already reached and toward which all the others are tending, I feel myself led to believe that among them there will soon no longer be a place except for democratic liberty or for the tyranny of the Caesars.>" Tocqueville cites here p. 511 of the second volume.

often happened to abuse this power in order arbitrarily to take away a citizen's property or his life. Their tyranny weighed prodigiously on a few; but it did not extend to a great number; it was tied to a few great principal matters and neglected the rest; it was violent and limited.[d]

d. 7 March 1838.

I said in the first part of this book that the new societies could well finally arrive at something similar to what we saw at the fall of the Roman empire. There is no longer any middle ground, I said, between the government of all and the tyranny of the Caesars.

Four years of new meditations made me consider the same matter from another point of view and convinced me that if men are enslaved, they will be so in an entirely new fashion and will exhibit a spectacle for which the past has not prepared us.

There was something of the great, of the colossal in the Roman tyranny, of the aristocratic, the magnificent, of the master of slaves, of the barbaric, of the pagan. All things that cannot habitually be found in a civilized and democratic society.

New society, regular, peaceful, ruled with art and uniformity, mixture of college, seminary, regiment, asleep rather than chained in the arms of clerks and soldiers, bureaucratic tyranny, fond of red tape, very repressive of all impulse, destroying the will for great things in germ, but mild and regular, equal for all. A sort of paternity without the purpose of bringing the children to manhood.

That is the real and original picture. That of the first volume was declamatory, common, hackneyed and false (*Rubish,* 2).

To reflect.

If, instead of the disordered despotism of the army rabble, idea already known, it would not be better to introduce here the portrait of a regulated despotism in which everything happens with as much order, meticulousness, and tyranny as in a barracks.

If instead of that I adopt the ancient idea of military despotism, there is at least a new notion to show.

It is military despotism following *revolution and democratic anarchy,* becoming established in a time when everything has been overturned and when nothing has yet settled down in positions, habits, ideas, tastes, when everything is in question, when the limits of the just and the unjust are abolished, when even the limits of practice and custom no longer exist, when we are accustomed to everything, when we expect anything in advance, when nothing is absolutely unforeseen and everything possible.

[To the side] Perhaps the image of the barracks could be placed after that as the port, the definitive state (YTC, CVd, pp. 15–16).

On the different types of despotism in the work of Tocqueville, see James T. Schleifer, *The Making of Tocqueville's "Democracy in America,"* pp. 147–56, 179–85. Roger Boesche, "The Prison, Tocqueville's Model for Despotism," *Western Political Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (1980): 550–63, established some points of similarity between the despotism of Tocqueville and his idea of the prison.

It seems that, if despotism came to be established among the democratic nations of today, it would have other characteristics; it would be more extensive and milder, and it would degrade men without tormenting them.

I do not doubt that, in centuries of enlightenment and equality such as ours, sovereigns might have succeeded more easily in uniting all public powers in their hands alone, and in penetrating more habitually and more deeply into the circle of private interests, than any of those of antiquity were ever able to do. But this same equality, which facilitates despotism, tempers it; we have seen how, as men are more similar and more equal, public mores become more humane and milder; when no citizen has a great power or great wealth, tyranny lacks, in a way, opportunity and theater. Since all fortunes are mediocre, passions are naturally contained, imagination limited, pleasures simple. This universal moderation moderates the sovereign himself and stops within certain limits the disordered impulse of his desires.

Apart from these reasons drawn from the very nature of the social state, I could add many others that would take me beyond my subject; but I want to keep myself within the limits that I have set for myself.

Democratic governments will be able to become violent and even cruel in certain moments of great agitation and great dangers; but these crises will be rare and passing.

When I think about the petty passions of the men of our times, about the softness of their mores, about the extent of their enlightenment, about the purity of their religion, about the mildness of their morality, about their painstaking and steady habits, about the restraint that they nearly all maintain in vice as in virtue, I am not afraid that they will find in their leaders tyrants, but rather tutors.

So I think that the type of oppression by which democratic peoples are threatened will resemble nothing of what preceded it in the world; our contemporaries cannot find the image of it in their memories. I seek in vain myself for an expression that exactly reproduces the idea that I am forming of it and includes it; [<the thing that I want to speak about is new, and men have not yet created the expression which must portray it.>] the old words

of despotism and of tyranny do not work. The thing is new, so I must try to define it, since I cannot name it.[e]

I want to imagine under what new features despotism could present itself to the world; I see an innumerable crowd of similar and equal men who spin around restlessly, in order to gain small and vulgar pleasures with which they fill their souls.[f] Each one of them, withdrawn apart, is like a stranger to the destiny of all the others; his children and his particular friends form

e. The despotism that I fear for the generations to come has no precedent in the world and lacks a name. I will call it administrative despotism[1] for lack of anything better. <I would call it paternal if it aimed at making men free and if it set a limit for itself like paternity.>

[To the side: To be completely true, it is necessary to make it understood that equality can, it is true, lead as far as a violent and cruel oppression because of the weakness of individuals, but that is a rare and exceptional event. The ordinary course is one that I am pointing out.]

If you attentively examine all the tyrannies known in history, you see that they have all consisted of a more or less unlimited power entrusted to one or several men and which they used violently against a few. It was by its violence rather than by its *generality* that this tyranny made itself conspicuous.

[In the margin: It is in this portrait that all the originality and the depth of my idea resides. What I have at the end of my first work was hackneyed and superficial.]

(1) <Apply myself to finding a name for it. That is important> (*Rubish,* 2).

This difficulty in finding new words recalls Montesquieu who, in the foreword of *L'Esprit des lois* (*Œuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1951, II, p. 227), writes: "I had new ideas; it was very necessary to find new words, or to give new meanings to old ones."

On the origins of paternal despotism, see Rousseau, chapter IV, book I, of the *Contrat social* and his *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (*Œuvres complètes,* Paris: Pléiade, 1964, III, p. 182).

f. Liberty in the very midst of these diversions is always serious. But there is nothing so joyful as despotism. The sight of human miseries, the unhappy are its natural enemies. It loves on the contrary to find the image of joy everywhere in its path, and it is pleased with games and spectacles. However timid it is by its nature, it does not fear the excesses of a licentious gaity; and the foulest voluptuous pleasures do not frighten it. No one desires more than it does that peoples enjoy themselves, provided that they think only about enjoying themselves; and it willingly intoxicates them with pleasures so that they do more easily without happiness (YTC, CVd, p. 12).

In a similar fragment, on p. 13 of the same notebook, this sentence is found: "Only novice despots are enemies of joy. Free governments seek to give men happiness rather than pleasure" (YTC, CVd, p. 13). The *rubish* contains an identical passage.

for him the entire human species;[g] as for the remainder of his fellow citizens, he is next to them, but he does not see them; he touches them without feeling them; he exists only in himself and for himself alone, and if he still has a family, you can say that at least he no longer has a country.[h]

Above those men arises an immense and tutelary power that alone takes charge of assuring their enjoyment and of looking after their fate. It is absolute, detailed, regular, far-sighted and mild. It would resemble paternal power if, like it, it had as a goal to prepare men for manhood; but on the contrary it seeks only to fix them irrevocably in childhood; it likes the citizens to enjoy themselves, provided that they think only about enjoying themselves.[j] It works willingly for their happiness; but it wants to be the

g. In the margin: "<Perhaps narrow this tableau. See the effect that it produces when reading.>"

h. In the margin: "<See if this is not found *word for word* at individualism; that the idea was there would not be important.

"Very useful here, try to leave it.>"

j. Note in the manuscript:

> Idea that revolutions and anarchy could be combined with this sort of administrative despotism. Days of anarchy in years of despotism. Revolutions always short and not very profound, but perhaps frequent. Palace revolutions that I can easily distinguish from great revolutions, the near impossibility of which I depicted above. These are not revolutions truly speaking. Idea to introduce somewhere in this chapter. Because our contemporaries fear disorder much more than servitude, they must be struck from that side.

A draft comments:

> To fight despotism I am obliged to prove that it leads to anarchy. If it led only to itself, it would perhaps be followed willingly.
>
> [In the margin: Continuation of note (B. B.).
>
> Perhaps at the type of despotism which threatens us./
>
> If you could believe in a tranquil and stable despotism, that is to say, in the worst of all, my cause would be lost./
>
> A singular state, ours, in which we have had at the same time too little liberty and license, too little authority and tyranny!/
>
> For a people who has come to the state that I suppose, anarchy, license are possible accidents, even probable ones, but despotism is the normal condition.]
>
> Anarchy is not a lasting state, despotism is. Apathy where we find ourselves leads it is true to anarchy and to despotism. But I can say nonetheless that it leads to despotism because despotism is the final state. Can't this be disputed? And is it not permissible to believe that, in a country in which you would have equality of conditions

unique agent for it and the sole arbiter; it attends to their security, provides for their needs, facilitates their pleasures, conducts their principal affairs, directs their industry, settles their estates, divides their inheritances;[k] how can it not remove entirely from them the trouble to think and the difficulty of living?

This is how it makes the use of free will less useful and rarer every day; how it encloses the action of the will within a smaller space and little by little steals from each citizen even the use of himself.[m] Equality has prepared men for all these things; it has disposed men to bear them and often even to regard them as a benefit.

without rooted free institutions, you could go perpetually from anarchy to despotism and from despotism to anarchy without ever settling down? No, despotism would finish by taking root, growing and finally covering the whole country with its harmful shadow.

If that is true, it must be said. It would be an order of ideas that could be developed with advantage and with coloring.

You could believe that equality gives too much taste for independence for despotism to be lasting, and too few habits of independence and means of defending it for liberty to be lasting./

I believe, after all, that all the movement of my (illegible word), which is the tendency of democratic societies toward despotism, is true and must remain, but it must be *amply* inserted somewhere that this tendency does not exclude a great deal of anarchy before and during this gradual but not *continuous* march toward despotism. Equality, without rooted free institutions, leading to anarchy almost as energetically as to despotism (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 48–49).

k. Toward the end of the manuscript of the chapter: "≠The aristocracy of England is the only one that knows how to defend itself and that has offered liberty to men at the cost of equality; it will fall, but it will fall slowly, and with glory.≠"

m. There are men who have no will to distinguish themselves from their fellows; there are others who have, on the contrary, a permanent and continual will to do so. There are others finally who make only small efforts in order to raise themselves above the earth and who immediately fall back. The latter are the unhappiest of all; for they have the troubles of ambition without having the dubious pleasures of it.

All of man is in the will. His entire future is hidden there as in a germ that the first ray of good fortune comes to make fruitful. There are women who put qualities of character before everything, because those qualities provide the tranquillity of every day, and for those women the idea of happiness does not go beyond the tranquillity and peace of the household. Women of that kind recall to me those men who prefer the type of social paralysis given by despotism to the agitation and the great emotions of liberty. Both hold the same place in my estimation (YTC, CVa, p. 56).

After having thus taken each individual one by one into its powerful hands, and having molded him as it pleases, the sovereign power extends its arms over the entire society; it covers the surface of society with a network of small, complicated, minute, and uniform rules, which the most original minds and the most vigorous souls cannot break through to go beyond the crowd; it does not break wills, but it softens them, bends them and directs them; [<≠in certain moments of great passions and great dangers, the sovereign power becomes suddenly violent and arbitrary. Habitually it is moderate, benevolent, regular and humane≠>] it rarely forces action, but it constantly opposes your acting; it does not destroy, it prevents birth; it does not tyrannize, it hinders, it represses, it enervates, it extinguishes, it stupifies, and finally it reduces each nation to being nothing more than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd.[n]

I have always believed that this sort of servitude, regulated, mild and peaceful, of which I have just done the portrait, could be combined better than we imagine with some of the external forms of liberty, and that it

n. On a loose sheet of the manuscript:

Centralization./

Show well that the administrative despotism that I am speaking about is independent of representative, liberal or revolutionary institutions, in a word, of political power; that whether the political world is led by an absolute king, by one or several assemblies, whether it is contested in the name of liberty or of order, whether it even falls into anarchy, whether it becomes weak and is divided, the action of the administrative power will be neither less continuous nor less strong, nor less overwhelming.

[To the side: The man or class that puts the administrative machine in motion can change without the machine changing. You can argue in order to know who will hold the instrument of tyranny, but the instrument remains the same.]

It is a true distinction and one very important to make in order to dispel the cloud that exists in the mind of the reader every time that you threaten with tyranny the men of today who live amid anarchy and who see political power vacillate or become weak./

[To the side: A great political anarchy and an overwhelming administrative despotism./

4 May 1838.]

would not be impossible for it to be established in the very shadow of the sovereignty of the people.o

o. So you can say that for democratic peoples centralization is an innate idea. Not only will this monstrous concentration of all the social [v: political] powers in the same hands not shock the natural ideas of democratic peoples as regards government, but it will favor several of the secret instincts and the most lively tastes that equality [v: their social state] suggests.

Equality of conditions suggests naturally to men an intense and constant taste for material well-being. I said so elsewhere. I have also shown in another place how, as equality became greater, each man, finding himself more independent and more separated from his fellows, felt more disposed to *consider* himself (this word implies a contradiction with what precedes on the innate idea of centralization) separately and to live in isolation.

Those are powerful instruments of tyranny for whoever knows how to use them.

Far from combating these natural tendencies of a democratic social state, a government which aims for absolute power will work with all its power to make them irresistible, and it will inflame the passions that liberty should moderate or extinguish. There exist in the south of Europe petty princes whose tyranny is so touchy and so irksome that the life of the most inoffensive citizens [v: the most servile and the most peaceful souls are] was saddened and made uncomfortable by it. Those princes are, if I am not mistaken, clumsy despots. They bring to the execution of their designs more zeal than light, and they do not know that in the centuries in which we are living men are more disposed to bear that you violate their rights than their comforts.

[To the side: Two consequences of the taste for material well-being for a despot to look after: 1. Softening of souls which causes you no longer to have a taste for the highest pleasures that liberty provides; 2. Effort of the whole human spirit toward the acquisition of well-being, which causes you no longer to have the time to give yourself to those pleasures.]

The clever man who seeks to establish absolute power among a democratic nation will demand only one thing from the citizens: that they do not get involved in the government and contract none of the habits that can in the long run lead men to get involved in it. But he will also work hard to make civil life as independent, as prosperous, as easy as it can be without political liberty. He will facilitate material well-being with all his power; he will honor it, he will glorify it each day in the eyes of the crowd, and pushing with all his power the souls that are naturally inclined toward solely the enjoyments of the senses, he will turn them away from the most beautiful works and the most noble pleasures of man.

Among democratic peoples men have little leisure; they are all naturally very occupied with their private affairs and only impatiently do they bear being turned away from them. The concern for common interests distracts and fatigues them; the sovereign power appears and unburdens them. Do not believe that it intends to oppress them in this way; it is relieving them. It carefully organizes the time of which they

[I suppose that a democratic nation, after destroying within it all the secondary powers, establishes in its midst a very inquisitorial, very extensive, very centralized, very powerful executive power, that it confers on this power the right to conduct all the details of public affairs and to lead a part of private affairs, that it put [*sic*] individuals in a strict and daily dependence on this power, but that it makes this executive power itself depend on an elected legislature which, without governing, traces the principal rules of the government.

<I go still further and I suppose that the administration, instead of being

make such good use, and removes from them the troubles and the worries of government in order to deliver them entirely to concerns about their private fortunes.

So the State is full of solicitude for the happiness of the citizens, but it wants to be the unique agent and the sole (illegible word) of it. It is the State that takes care of providing their security, facilitating their pleasures, directing the principal affairs; the State itself creates roads, digs canals, directs industries, divides inheritances. It may even be able to plow the earth and finally take away from each man even the difficulty of living!

Equality of conditions has prepared men for all these things; it has disposed them to bear them and often even to regard them as a good.

This is how, aiding itself sometimes with the vices of men, sometimes with their weaknesses, often with their inexperience, the central power little by little and without effort takes hold of the entire life of a democratic people. It does not tear their rights away from them; their rights are abandoned to it. It does not do violence to mores [v: sentiments]; it does not overturn ideas, but it gently directs both toward servitude.

Here it is, acknowledged arbiter of everything. Society does nothing for itself, and it does everything. Divided from his fellows, each citizen thinks only of himself. The source of public virtues has dried up.

[What will the first tyrant who is coming be called? I do not know, but he is approaching. What is still missing for this deceptive symbol of public order to disappear and for a profound and incurable disorder to be revealed?

What more is needed for this sublime authority, for this visible providence that we have established among us to be able to trample underfoot the most holy laws, do violence as it pleases to our hearts and walk over our heads? War. Peace has prepared despotism, war establishes it.

[In the margin: Not only as a consequence of victory, but war alone by the need for power and for concentration that it creates.

A new aristocracy of soldiers is the only one that seems to me still practical.]] (YTC, CVd, pp. 3–4, 8–9, 9–10, 10–12).

There are several variants of these passages in the same pages. In another place, Tocqueville repeats: "When I said that there was no more aristocracy possible, I was mistaken; you can still have the aristocracy of men of war" (YTC, CVd, p. 26).

alongside the legislative chambers, is in the very legislature, as was seen in France at the time of the Convention, so that the same elected power makes the law and executes it even in its smallest details.>

All that means, if I am not mistaken, that after allowing the sovereign power as a master to direct each citizen [v: particular wills] and to bend him every day as it pleases, the sovereign itself is subjected from time to time to the general will [*volontés générales:* (Translator)] of the nation.]

Our contemporaries are incessantly tormented by two hostile passions: they feel the need to be led and the desire to remain free. Unable to destroy either the one or the other of these opposite instincts, they work hard to satisfy both at the same time. They imagine a unique, tutelary, omnipotent power, but elected by the citizens. They combine centralization[p] and sovereignty of the people. That gives them some relief. They console themselves about being in tutelage by thinking that they have chosen their tutors themselves. Each individual endures being bound, because he sees that it is not a man or a class, but the people itself that holds the end of the chain.

In this system, the citizens emerge for a moment from dependency in order to indicate their master, and return to it.[q]

p. The French believe that centralization is French. They are wrong; it is democratic and I dare to predict that all peoples whose social state will be the same and who follow only the instincts that this social state suggests will arrive at the point where we are./

Destroy classes, equalize ranks, make men similar, and you will see power become centralized as if by itself, whatever the country, the genius of the people or the state of enlightenment. Particular circumstances will be able to hasten the natural movement or slow it down, but not stop it or create an opposite one.

[To the side: Contained within certain limits, centralization is a necessary fact, and I add that it is a fact about which we must be glad./

A strong and intelligent central power is one of the first political necessities in centuries of equality. Acknowledge it boldly] (*Rubish,* 2).

Already in 1828, in an already quoted letter to Gustave de Beaumont, Tocqueville said of Edward I: "He reestablished order and made good civil laws which, as you know, often make people forget about good political laws" (*Correspondance avec Beaumont, OC,* VIII, 1, p. 55).

q. "<This is seen above all today in the nations of Europe, still half filled with liberal passions that arose from the struggle with aristocracy, working hard to find a form of

There are many men today who accommodate themselves very easily to this type of compromise between administrative despotism and sovereignty of the people, and who think they have guaranteed the liberty of individuals when it is to the national power that they deliver that liberty. That is not enough for me. The nature of the master is much less important to me than the obedience.

I will not deny, however, that such a constitution is infinitely preferable to one that, after concentrating all powers, would put them in the hands of an unaccountable man or body. Of all the different forms that democratic despotism could take, the latter would assuredly be the worst.

When the sovereign is elected or closely supervised by a legislature truly elected and independent, the oppression that it can make individuals suffer is sometimes greater; but the oppression is always less degrading because each citizen, when he is being hindered and when he is reduced to powerlessness, can still imagine that by obeying he is only submitting to himself, and that it is to one of his desires that he is sacrificing all the rest.[r]

I understand equally that, when the sovereign represents the nation and depends on it, the strength and the rights that are taken from each citizen do not serve only the leader of the State, but profit the State itself, and that individuals gain some advantage from the sacrifice of their independence that they have made to the public.

[I understand also that when public opinion draws certain limits and can keep the sovereign power within them, tyranny properly speaking is

government that at the same time satisfies the love that they still have for independence and the new instincts that make them tend toward servitude>" (Note in the drafts that could also refer to another part of the chapter, *Rubish,* 2).

r. In the margin: "<I do not know if, everything considered, this is still not the best course that you can reasonably hope from equality and the only type of liberty that it is capable of allowing to men.>"

And a little further along: "<All the end of the chapter starting from here seems to me to come to an end too abruptly. All the more because that is the most vulnerable side and the most interesting side of the entire book.>"

little to be feared, or at least it can never become general. Thus it is not the tyranny of the social power that is the most to fear, but its regular use.][s]

To create a national representation in a very centralized country, is therefore to diminish the evil that extreme centralization can produce, but not to destroy it.[t]

s. In the margin: "<This is not relevant because I have already ruled out the idea of tyranny above.>"

t. Title on a jacket:

That the instinct of democratic peoples is to want one great assembly of its representatives rather than secondary assemblies. That a government that aims at tyranny among a democratic people can tolerate a great general representation {(it is often obliged to do so)}, but must never allow secondary assemblies {(which is usually easy for it)}.

[Within the jacket] Unique assembly./

If I were secretly a friend of absolute power and were, however, forced to grant my country the forms of liberty, I would seek first to untangle among free institutions those that a democratic people imagines the best, that it requires with the most authority, and that its leaders cannot refuse to it without danger; I would soon discover that what it asks above all, still less by reasoning than by instinct, is one general assembly of its representatives. All the rest seems doubtful or indifferent to it, but this first axiom of its politics seems principal and almost unique to it. So I would hasten to yield to this irresistible desire of an emerging democracy.

I would allow the free will of all the citizens to be represented in one assembly, but I would want it to express itself only there. I would grant independence for great affairs; I would keep despotism for small ones, so that if I were forced to tolerate liberty in the laws, I would at least prevent liberty from becoming established in habits.

[In the margin: So I would limit myself to making a magnificent exception to the general rule of servitude, following this principle of logic that the exception proves the rule and confirms it.]

≠So I would allow the deputies of the whole country to deliberate on peace and war, regulate the finances of the State, its prosperity, its industry, its life, but I would prevent at all cost the inhabitants [v: representatives] of a *canton* from having the liberty to settle things among themselves.≠

A great legislative body placed at the center of a democratic people manifests the present independence of this people, but it cannot ever guarantee its future independence.

Since it is at the very same time provided with a great material strength and an immense moral power, since it alone has the right to speak in the general silence, since it alone can act amid the universal weakness, it feels itself above all the laws; it is free

I see clearly that, in this way, individual intervention is kept in the most important affairs; but it is no less suppressed in the small ones and the particular ones.[u] We forget that it is dangerous, above all, to enslave men

from all the rules and sheltered from all points of resistance. So it bends wills as it wishes, abolishes rights, alters or changes mores. And if it comes finally to be destroyed or to destroy itself, the habits of servility that it created survive it.

[To the side: You bring to the national representation men who have received no preliminary and in a way primary education in the representative system; they appear ignorant, undisciplined, indecisive, confused; you then say that it is the representative system which is worth nothing and you distance yourself from it.

All that I see and hear since my arrival in Paris (April 1837) shows me that in a lively way.]

To concentrate all the political life of a people in one assembly is to give to liberty only a single head and to expose it to perishing with one blow.

So as long as a free institution of this nature remains isolated, it always leaves fair hopes to despotism; it is an evil that carries its remedy with it (YTC, CVd, pp. 45–48).

There are other versions of this paragraph in CVd, pp. 48–52. Following the coup d'état of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, Tocqueville will abandon all political activity. In February 1852, he writes to a friend, with an entirely similar tone:

> I have refused any type of candidacy for the next elections, not wanting to have the appearance of taking seriously the parody of a free government that is going to be played. You know that the new assembly is nothing because it has no publicity and can only reject the budget without being able to amend it, and you have learned undoubtedly that the candidates who would want to oppose those of the government cannot either speak to the voters, or write to them, or form committees, or travel across the country without risk of being arrested; that in a word the new power pursues its plan to govern with the aid of the peasants and the soldiers, borrowing from democracy only its worst principle, the brutal strength of numbers, the universal vote amid the silence and the darkness that despotism creates. You understand that it is better to write books than to get involved in such a mess (Letter of Tocqueville to Milnes, 9 February 1852. With the kind permission of Trinity College, Cambridge. Houghton papers, 25/209).

u. In the margin:

<Perhaps begin this page with this sentence:

I see citizens who gather together to constitute and regulate in common a sole and unique power that represents them all and to which each one of them delivers the care of his particular interests and which he charges with exercising all rights.

In this way, something of individual intervention is preserved in the most important and most general affairs, but it is suppressed entirely in the small ones and the particular ones. We forget . . .>

in the detail. I would, for my part, be led to believe liberty less necessary in the great things than in the least, if I thought that the one could ever be assured without possessing the other.

Subjection in small affairs manifests itself every day and makes itself felt indiscriminately by all citizens. It does not drive them to despair; but it thwarts them constantly and leads them to relinquish the use of their will [and finally to give up on themselves]. It thus extinguishes their spirit little by little, and enervates their souls; while the obedience that is due only in a small number of very grave, but very rare circumstances, displays servitude only now and then, and makes it weigh only on certain men. In vain will you charge these same citizens, whom you have made so dependent on the central power, with choosing from time to time the representatives of this power; this use so important, but so short and so rare, of their free will, will not prevent them from losing little by little the ability to think, to feel and to act by themselves, and from thus falling gradually below the level of humanity.[v]

I add that they will soon become incapable of [properly] exercising the great and sole privilege remaining to them. Democratic peoples who have introduced liberty in the political sphere, at the same time that they increased despotism in the administrative sphere, have been led to very strange peculiarities.[w] If small affairs, in which simple good sense can suf-

v. The Americans have avoided these first dangers of democratic infancy. Although they have granted immense rights to society, they have not sacrificed the individual to it. They have left to the latter, outside of the political world, a great *security* and a great *independence.* They have not given the government the same *civil privileges,* and they have not put it beyond the reach and the control of the judicial power by requiring in a stupid manner as we the necessity of the division of powers (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

w. Note at the end of the manuscript of the chapter:

Their pet hobby is to want to combine the greatest political independence with the greatest administrative dependence.

I would do well, I believe, to hit this prejudice straight on, to say something analogous to the above sentence, to say that that comes from tugging in opposite directions. We tend toward liberty and toward servitude at the same time; we want to combine them, although they cannot be combined. Not able to be free, we want at least to be oppressed in the name of the people.

fice, must be managed, they consider that the citizens are incapable of it; if it is a matter of the government of the whole State, they entrust these citizens with immense prerogatives; they make them alternately the playthings of the sovereign and its masters, more than kings and less than men. After having exhausted all the different systems of election, without finding one that suits them, they are surprised and still search; as if the evil that they notice were not due to the constitution of the country much more than to that of the electoral body.

It is, in fact, difficult to imagine how men who have entirely given up the habit of directing themselves, could succeed in choosing well those who should lead them; and it cannot be believed that a liberal, energetic and wise government can ever come out of the votes of a people of servants.[x]

A constitution that would be republican at the head, and ultra-monarchical in all the other parts has always seemed to me an ephemeral monster. The vices of those who govern and the imbecility of the governed

x. Unity, centralization./

We believe we are making a clever and sufficient concession by allowing these same men, almost entirely deprived of their free will in every day actions, to unite now and then to choose one of the three great powers. In other words, after refusing to them the right to direct their own affairs, we concede to them the privilege of governing the State.

[To the side: The idea opposite is good. If I want to strike minds by the picture of *administrative despotism,* I must move away as little as possible from *what we see before our eyes.* A tyranny of the Caesars was a bogeyman that cannot make anyone afraid, although at bottom that is not so unreasonable as we think. I must not aim to say the most complete truth, but the most easily grasped and the most useful.]

This is a very insufficient and very dangerous remedy.

A national assembly named by such voters cannot fail to be *revolutionary* or *servile.*

It is a great foolishness to hope to make a strong, liberal, energetic and wise government emerge from a people of servants./

6 April 1838 (*Rubish,* 2).

On another page, Tocqueville adds: "I cannot prevent myself from considering this form of government as transitory. It leads necessarily to institutions truly [v: more] liberal or to the non-accountable despotism of one man" (*Rubish,* 2).

would not take long to lead them to ruin; and the people, tired of its representatives and of itself, would create freer institutions, or would soon return to stretching out at the feet of a single master.[y]

y. "Those who believe they are able to stop for long at a government which is republican at its head and ultra-monarchical at its tail, *chambers* and a *centralized administration,* are great fools. But the thing can go for a while in this way. Portray it in the place where I do the portrait of democratic despotism.

"22 June" (*Rubish,* 2).

CHAPTER 7[a]

Continuation of the Preceding Chapters

I believe that it is easier to establish an absolute and despotic government among a [democratic] people where conditions are equal than among another, and I think that, if such a government were once established among such a people, not only would it oppress men, but in the long run it would rob from each of them some of the principal attributes of humanity.[b]

So despotism seems to me particularly to be feared in democratic ages.

a. The jacket that contains the manuscript of the chapter also contains Tocqueville's working manuscript and a copy of the entire chapter written in his hand. You can read on the jacket: "Continuation of the preceding chapter./

"[In pencil] I bet that M. de C[hateaubriand? (ed.)]. did not understand this chapter.

"20 minutes."

In the plan for the fourth part included in *Rubish,* 1 (contained in a jacket that is found with the drafts of the chapter on material enjoyments and that bears the title HOW EQUALITY OF RANKS SUGGESTS TO MEN THE TASTE FOR LIBERTY AND FOR EQUALITY), the chapter on the type of despotism is followed by another with the title WHAT MUST BE DONE TO TURN ASIDE THIS DANGER. Tocqueville notes to the side of the title: "This title contains the idea, but not the expression that this idea must have. The title drafted in this way would be too ambitious. It would promise more than I can keep."

The same idea is found on the jacket that contains the manuscript: "This title means nothing at all, but all those that I want to put in its place mean too much. The only real title would be: What must be done to avoid the evils that I point out in the preceding chapters. But such a title would announce much more than the chapter can hold; in such a case, it is better to be useless than ambitious."

b. "The social state separates men, the political state must draw them closer./

"The social state gives them the taste for well-being [v: inclines them toward the earth], the political state must raise them up by giving them great ideas and great emotions" (*Rubish,* 2).

I would, I think, have loved liberty in all times; but I feel myself inclined to adore it in the times in which we live.

I am persuaded, on the other hand, that in the centuries which we are entering, all those who try to base liberty on privilege and on aristocracy will fail. All those who want to attract and keep authority within a single class will fail. There is today no sovereign power clever enough and strong enough to establish despotism by reestablishing permanent distinctions among its subjects;[c] nor is there any legislator so wise and so powerful who

c. From now on the atmosphere that surrounds us will be democratic, you will be able to breathe only on condition of taking up your position there.

There show how the members of the aristocracy can without haste and without delay, without pride and without servility, draw closer to the people and, abandoning the memories of another time, take a place in the present time . . .

Then add.

As for those who will want to hold themselves aside, hoping to escape in this way the common destruction and to preserve for other times the elements of an aristocracy, they will soon discover that life is tiring and difficult for them. Surrounded by hostile prejudices, the butt of suspicions, forced to breathe on all sides the air of hatred, objects of pity and envy at the same time, more strangers in the country where they were born than the traveler who comes to find shelter under their roof, they will be like the Jews after the destruction of the temple; like [them (ed.)], they will constantly await a Messiah who must not come. But they will differ from the Jews on one point; they will not perpetuate themselves. An aristocracy in vain wants to outlive its grandeur and to preserve itself intact amid the ruin of the institutions that it established; it cannot succeed. And if its enemies are powerless to accomplish its ruin, it will soon take charge itself of accomplishing it. Careers that gain honors and glory are closed to its members, and they refuse to embrace professions that give or preserve wealth. So they are as if struck with immobility amid the universal movement; among a people in which all work, they are reduced to an idleness so complete that you have never seen any thing like it. Within the most aristocratic [democratic (ed.)] societies this immense and useless leisure overwhelms them. A restless boredom devours them. Since they cannot obtain the most noble pleasures of men, they seek the tumultuous and coarse enjoyments that tear them violently away from themselves, and they console themselves with horses and dogs for not being able to govern the State. They have neither the courtesy nor the energy of their ancestors; they have only preserved their pride. And you are astonished by the unimaginable sterility of the races most fruitful in great men./

At every moment the law of inheritances comes to surprise a few among them amid these obscene and unworthy leisure activities and throws them into obscurity and poverty. The solitude then becomes more profound around those who remain, the isolation more frightening, the discouragement more complete every day; a name

is able to maintain free institutions if he does not take equality as first principle and as symbol. So all those among our contemporaries who want to create or to assure the independence and dignity of their fellows must appear as friends of equality; and the only means worthy of them of appearing so is to be so: the success of their holy enterprise depends on it.[d]

Thus, it is not a matter of reconstructing an aristocratic society, but of making liberty emerge from within the democratic society in which God makes us live.

is lost, a precious memory fades, the trace of several generations gone by disappears. New families come out of the void into which the first descend. Power, wealth and glory have forever passed into other hands.

I am profoundly convinced that it is no less impossible to establish a new aristocracy than to preserve the ruins of the former aristocracy. For my part, I cannot understand the fears that are inspired among the friends of democracy, openly or in secret, by those who intend to re-create to a certain measure ranks, privileges, hereditary rights, permanent influences. Such men are dangerous only to themselves. They only compromise the cause that they embrace and the conservative doctrines that they mix with it.

The current of the century is against them, and the day when finally they want seriously to raise the dike that is to contain it, they will immediately be swept away forever by it. So democracy has henceforth nothing to fear from its adversaries. It is from within that its corrupters and its masters will come. I do not see how its reign could be prevented from becoming established, but I easily discover what must be done to make it detestable./

What is the danger?

To flatter the feelings of democratic hate and envy and to gain power in this way.

To give equality lavishly, to take away liberty in return (YTC, CVc, pp. 55–58).

F. D. often repeats that an aristocracy is a command staff. That is a good definition. An aristocracy is not a body by itself all alone, but the head of a body. Reduced to itself it can still do brilliant things, but not great and lasting things.

This comparison of an aristocracy to a command staff was found with a rigorous exactitude in 1792. The officers being all gathered on the right of the Rhine, the soldiers remained on the left bank. This was the final demonstration of what I said above, the most striking image of the state of French society (YTC, CVa, pp. 52–53). The same idea appears in YTC, CVc, p. 55.

d. In the margin of the copy of the chapter, in pencil: "I strongly persist in asking deletion."

These two first truths seem to me simple, clear and fertile, and they lead me naturally to consider what type of free government can be established among a people in which conditions are equal.

It results from the very constitution of democratic nations and from their needs that, among them, the power of the sovereign must be more uniform, more centralized, more extensive, more penetrating, more powerful than elsewhere.[e] Society there is naturally more active and stronger; the individual, more subordinate and weaker. The one does more; the other less; that is inevitable.[f]

So in democratic countries you must not expect the circle of individual independence ever to be as wide as in countries of aristocracy. But that is not to be desired; for among aristocratic nations, society is often sacrificed to the individual, and the prosperity of the greatest number to the grandeur of a few.

It is at the very same time necessary and desirable that the central power that directs a democratic people be active and powerful. It is not a matter of making it weak or indolent, but only of preventing it from abusing its agility and strength.[g]

e. "In democratic societies not only is the government stronger (illegible word) than the citizens, but also it alone has duration, foresight, extended plans, profound calculations. It surpasses the citizens as much in quality as in strength. At the next-to-last chapter. 1 September 1838" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 23).

f. In the margin: "Men who live in centuries of equality are naturally isolated and powerless; it is only by the artificial and temporary combination of their efforts that they can attain great objectives."

g. Notes on a page at the end of the manuscript of the chapter:

> Necessity of a strong government, because of the weakness or the destruction of all the other social bonds that could allow a society to march all alone and to contain disorder within certain limits./
>
> Remove all political government from an aristocracy, annul entirely the national, central power, a certain order will still be maintained there, because, exercising a certain influence on each other, individuals hold together, have the habit of immobility and keep in their place for a long time, without the political power getting involved.
>
> [To the side] *Another idea* to recall here. Among democratic peoples only the government has stability, duration, extended plans, views of the future, can follow extended undertakings, all things necessary to the well-being of nations which have such a long life. Everything is unstable and fleeting among democratic peoples, outside of the government.

What contributed the most to assure the independence of individuals in aristocratic centuries is that the sovereign power did not take charge alone of governing and administering the citizens; it was obliged to leave a part of this concern to the members of the aristocracy; so that the social power, always divided, never weighed entirely and in the same way on every man.[h]

Not only did the sovereign power not do everything by itself, but most of the officers who acted in its place, since they drew their power from the fact of their birth and not from it, were not constantly in its hand. It could not at any moment create them or destroy them, depending on its caprices, and bend them all uniformly to its least desires. That also guaranteed the independence of individuals.

I also understand that today you cannot resort to the same means, but I see democratic procedures that replace them.[j]

The same idea is expressed in a rough draft:

I confess that the government among democratic peoples is easier and more convenient than in democracies [aristocracies (ed.)], but is it better? That is the question. Is the first merit of a government to work easily? If that was so, what better than despotism and what worse than liberty? What more stable than the one? You establish it one day and it works for a thousand years. What more fragile than the other? What efforts to establish it, what (illegible word) work to (illegible word) it. See however the result of the one and the other. So the ideal of perfection must be sought elsewhere (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 54).

h. You are astonished at first sight by the respect that is still witnessed today for *domanial property* and the little respect that is shown for *industrial property.*[1] That comes from the fact that domanial property .- [is (ed.)] .- ancient property, the property of aristocratic centuries and that the principles that protected it in these centuries (principles deriving from the social state) have left profound traces in the mores. While for industrial property, modern and democratic property, you give yourself to the instincts natural to democracy, which are to substitute the State for the individual and constantly to break the latter under the feet of the mass.

1. Those two terms are not in natural opposition, but I do not have the time to clarify my thought (*Rubish,* 2).

j. Remedies to democracy indicated in the course of the book, to gather together perhaps in the first or final chapter.

[In the margin: Try to arrive at the same conclusion by another path than in political society.]

Instead of giving to the sovereign alone all the administrative powers that were taken from the corporation or from the nobles, you can entrust a part of them to secondary bodies formed temporarily out of simple citizens; in this way, the liberty of individuals will be surer, without their equality being less.

The Americans, who are not as attached as we to words, have kept the name of county for the largest of their administrative districts; but they have in part replaced the county by a provincial assembly[k] [chosen freely by the inhabitants themselves].[m]

I will admit without difficulty that in a period of equality like ours, it would be unjust and unreasonable to institute hereditary officials; but nothing prevents substituting for them, to a certain measure, elected officials. Election is a democratic expedient that assures the independence of the official vis-à-vis the central power, as much as and more than heredity can do among aristocratic peoples.

Aristocratic countries are full of rich and influential individuals who know how to be self-sufficient and who are not easily or secretly oppressed; and the latter keep power within the general habits of moderation and restraint [<while in democratic countries each citizen taken in isolation cannot offer any resistance and does not ever succeed in

Necessity of not giving omnipotence to the majority in order not to lose the liberty to act which results naturally from a democratic social state.

Necessity of introducing liberty among a democratic people in order to give it the necessary movement toward things of the mind.

Pour out enlightenment lavishly in democratic nations in order to elevate the tendencies of the human mind. Democracy without enlightenment and liberty would lead the human species back to barbarism.

Necessity of beliefs in order to immaterialize the lives of democratic peoples. Democratic peoples can be grasped only by them. Religion is an almost non-material interest which gives celestial thoughts./

Do not adopt one social principle *alone* however good it seems.

Do not use one form of government *alone.* Stay away from acridity [unity? (ed.)] (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 54–55).

k. "Only provincial institutions can make the democratic instinct of liberty a habit" (YTC, CVd, p. 19).

m. This fragment is found in the copy of the chapter.

attracting the eyes of the public to the evils that tyranny makes him suffer.>]

I know well that democratic countries do not naturally present similar individuals; but there you can artificially create something analogous.

I believe firmly that you cannot establish an aristocracy[n] again in the world; but I think that simple citizens by associating together can constitute very wealthy, very influential, very strong beings, in a word aristocratic persons.[o]

[<Thus, in whatever direction I look, I discover association as the most powerful remedy for the evils with which equality threatens us.>]

n. "As for me, all that I wish for my country is that those who aim for despotism there aim at the same time for aristocracy" (YTC, CVd, p. 25).

o. In a jacket with rough drafts of the chapter which bears the title IDEA OF ARISTOCRATIC PERSONS:

.-.-.-.-.-.-.-

Possibility of creating within a democratic people *aristocratic persons,* means of uniting in part the advantages of the two systems.

What I mean by aristocratic persons are permanent and legal associations such as cities, *cantons,* departments, or voluntary and temporary associations such as, I suppose, in literature, the Norman association; in industry, the company of *Messageries;* in politics, the society "Aide-toi le ciel t'aidera." These associations are cited as examples and not as models.

This would have one part of the advantages of aristocracy properly speaking without its disadvantages.

That would not establish permanent inequality and .-.- the injustices that .-.-.- ; it would not elevate .-.- certain men above .-.- all the rest . . .

It would create powerful individuals capable of great efforts, of vast projects, of firm resistance; it would bind men together in another way, but as tightly as aristocracy. It would make the species greater and would elevate thought. . . . (*Rubish,* 2).

On the question of associations for Tocqueville, see: Renato Cavallaro, "Dall'individualismo al controllo democratico: aspetti del pensiero di Alexis de Tocqueville sull'associazionismo volontario," *Critica Sociologica,* 28, 1973–1974, pp. 99–125; William H. George, "Montesquieu and De Tocqueville and Corporative Individualism," *American Political Science Review* 16, no. 1 (1922): 10–21; Georges Gojat, "Les corps intermédiaires et la décentralisation dans l'oeuvre de Tocqueville," in *Libéralisme, traditionalisme, décentralisation* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1952), pp. 1–43; and José María Sauca Cano, *La ciencia de la asociación de Tocqueville* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1995).

In this manner several of the greatest political advantages of aristocracy would be obtained, without its injustices or its dangers. A political, industrial, commercial, or even scientific and literary association is an enlightened and powerful citizen whom you cannot bend at will or oppress in the shadow, and who, by defending its particular rights against the demands of power, saves common liberties.

In times of aristocracy, each man is always bound in a very tight way to several of his fellow citizens, so that you cannot attack the former without the others running to his aid. In centuries of equality, each individual is naturally isolated; he has no hereditary friends whose help he can require, no class whose sympathies for him are assured; he is easily set apart, and he is trampled underfoot with impunity.[p] Today, a citizen who is oppressed has therefore only one means of defending himself; it is to address himself to the whole nation, and if it is deaf to him, to humanity; he has only one means to do it, it is the press. Thus liberty of the press is infinitely more precious among democratic nations than among all others; it alone cures most of the evils that equality can produce. Equality isolates and weakens men; but the press places beside each one of them a very powerful weapon, which the weakest and most isolated can use. Equality takes away from each individual the support of those close to him; but the press allows him to call to his aid all his fellow citizens and all those similar to him. Printing hastened the progress of equality, and it is one of its best correctives.

I think that men who live in aristocracies can, if necessary, do without liberty of the press; but those who inhabit democratic countries cannot do so. [<For the latter, between independence and servitude, I see hardly anything except the press.>] To guarantee the personal independence of the latter, I do not trust great political assemblies, parliamentary prerogatives, the proclamation of sovereignty of the people.

All these things, up to a certain point, fit with individual servitude; but

p. In the margin: "The entire style of this chapter is defective and to review, but the thoughts are so difficult that at this moment I can only concern myself with them."

this servitude cannot be complete if the press is free. The press is, par excellence, the democratic instrument of liberty.

I will say something analogous about the judicial power.[q]

It is the essence of the judicial power to occupy itself with particular interests and to fix its eyes on the small matters that are exposed to its view; it is also the essence of this power not to come by itself to the help of those who are oppressed, but to be constantly at the disposal of the most humble man among them. The latter, however weak you suppose him to be, can always force the judge to listen to his complaint and to respond to it: that results from the very constitution of the judicial power.

So such a power is especially applicable to the needs of liberty, in a time when the eye and the hand of the sovereign are introduced constantly into the most minute details of human actions, and when individuals, too weak to protect themselves, are too isolated to be able to count on the help of those like them. The strength of the courts has been, in all times, the greatest guarantee that can be offered to individual independence, but that is true above all in democratic centuries; particular rights and interests are always in danger there, if the judicial power does not grow and expand as conditions become equal.

Equality suggests to men several tendencies very dangerous for liberty, and the legislator must always keep his eyes open to them. I will only recall the principal ones.

Men who live in democratic centuries do not easily understand the utility of forms;[r] they feel an instinctive disdain for them. I spoke about the reasons for this elsewhere. Forms excite their scorn and often their hatred. Since they usually aspire only to easy and present enjoyments, they throw themselves impetuously toward the object of each one of their desires; the least delays lead them to despair. This temperament, which they bring to political life, sets them against forms which slow or stop them each day in some of their desires.

q. In the margin: "The weaker individuals are, the stronger the courts must be."

r. With the rough drafts of this chapter, you find a fragment on forms, poorly drafted, and which seems to be in the hand of Louis de Kergorlay. See note u of p. 1273 and note g of p. 750. A note in the *rubish* mentions: "I had a good conversation with Louis about this entire subject; look at it again" (*Rubish,* 2).

This disadvantage that men of democracies find in forms is, however, what makes the latter so useful to liberty, their principal merit being to serve as a barrier between the strong and the weak, those who govern and the governed, to slow the first and to give to the second the time for them to figure things out. Forms are more necessary as the sovereign power is more active and more powerful and as individuals become more indolent and more feeble. Thus democratic peoples naturally need forms more than other peoples, and naturally they respect them less.[s] That merits very serious attention.

There is nothing more miserable than the superb disdain of most of our contemporaries for questions of forms; for today the smallest questions of forms have acquired an importance that they had not had until now. Several of the greatest interests of humanity are connected with it.

I think that, if the statesmen who lived in aristocratic centuries could sometimes scorn forms with impunity and often rise above them, those who lead peoples today must consider the least form with respect and neglect it only when an imperious necessity forces them to do so. In aristocracies, you had superstition for forms; we must have an enlightened and thoughtful cult of them.

Another instinct very natural to democratic peoples, and very dangerous, is that which leads them to scorn individual rights and to take them into little account.

Men are in general attached to a right and show it respect by reason of its importance or of the long use that they have made of it. Individual rights which are found among democratic peoples are ordinarily of little importance, very recent and very unstable; that means that they are often easily sacrificed and violated almost always without regrets.

Now it happens that, in this same time and among these same nations in which men conceive a natural scorn for the rights of individuals, the

s. "All peoples who have done great things for liberty have had the taste [v: the faith] and I could almost say superstition for forms./

"Forms are not liberty, but they are its body" (*Rubish,* 2).

rights of the society expand naturally and become stronger; that is to say that men become less attached to particular rights, at the moment when it would be most necessary to keep them and to defend the few of them that remain.[t]

So it is above all in the democratic times in which we find ourselves that the true friends of liberty and of human grandeur must, constantly, stand up and be ready to prevent the social power from sacrificing lightly the particular rights of some individuals to the general execution of its designs. In those times no citizen is so obscure that it is not very dangerous to allow him to be oppressed, or individual rights of so little importance that you can surrender to arbitrariness with impunity. The reason for it is simple. When you violate the particular right of an individual in a time when the human mind is penetrated by the importance and the holiness of the rights of this type, you do harm only to the one you rob. But to violate such a right today is to corrupt the national mores profoundly and to put the entire society at risk, because the very idea of these kinds of rights tends constantly among us to deteriorate and become lost.

[<I find as well and for entirely similar reasons that in democratic centuries, above all, sovereigns must watch themselves with the greatest care in order to repress the natural tendency which leads them to sacrifice a

t. [The beginning is missing (ed.)] that the confidence in the idea of the right of reason that is spreading each day, do you not notice that each day the idea of fact and of force replaces it, and what is the final and legitimate representative of force, if not the soldier?

[To the side: Do you not see that with equality without liberty we are marching toward a singular servitude and toward an inevitable barbarism? And if you see all these things, what are you doing?]

Do you not see that opinions are dividing more quickly than patrimonies, that each man is enclosing himself narrowly within his own mind, like the farm laborer in his field?

[To the side: Do you not see that souls are falling lower and that the love of liberty, this great and noble passion of man, is deserting him?]

That egoism is constantly taking on new strength without acquiring new light?

The idea of right which is being extinguished.

That sentiments become more individual each day, and that soon men will be more separated by their beliefs than they have ever been by inequality of conditions? (YTC, CVd, pp. 19–20).

particular right, however small it is, to the general execution to their designs.>]

There are certain habits, certain ideas, certain vices that belong to the state of revolution, and that a long revolution cannot fail to engender and to generalize, whatever its character, its objective and its theater are.

When whatever nation has several times in a short expanse of time changed leaders, opinions and laws, the men who compose it end by contracting the taste for movement and by becoming accustomed to all movements taking place rapidly and with the aid of force. They then naturally conceive a contempt for forms, whose impotence they see every day, and only with impatience do they bear the dominion of rules, which have been evaded so many times before their eyes.

Since the ordinary notions of equity and morality no longer suffice to explain and justify all the novelties to which the revolution gives birth each day, you latch onto the principle of social utility, you create the dogma of political necessity; and you become readily accustomed to sacrificing particular interests without scruples and to trampling individual rights underfoot, in order to attain more promptly the general goal that you propose.

These habits and these ideas, which I will call revolutionary,[u] because all revolutions produce them, manifest themselves within aristocracies as well

u. Definition of revolutionary spirit:
taste for rapid changes,
use of violence to bring them about,
tyrannical spirit,
contempt for forms,
contempt for acquired rights,
indifference about the means in view of the end, doctrine of the useful,
satisfaction given to brutal appetites./

The revolutionary spirit which everywhere is the greatest enemy of liberty and is such above all among democratic peoples, because there is a natural and secret bond between it and democracy. It takes its source in the natural faults of democracy and scorns them.

A revolution can sometimes be just and necessary; it can establish liberty, but the revolutionary spirit is always detestable and can never lead to anything except to tyranny (*Rubish,* 2).

as among democratic peoples; but among the first they are often less powerful and always less durable, because there they encounter habits, ideas, flaws and failings that are contrary to them. So they fade away by themselves as soon as the revolution is finished, and the nation returns to its former political ways. It is not always so in democratic countries, where it is always to be feared that revolutionary instincts, becoming milder and more regular without dying out, will gradually turn into governmental mores and administrative habits.[v]

So I do not know of a country in which revolutions are more dangerous than democratic countries, because, apart from the accidental and passing evils that revolutions can never fail to produce, they always risk creating permanent and, so to speak, eternal ones.

I believe that there are honest acts of resistance and legitimate rebellions [v. revolutions]. So I am not saying, in an absolute way, that men of democratic times must never make revolutions; but I think that they are right to hesitate more than all the others before undertaking them, and that it is better for them to bear many of the inconveniences of the present state than to resort to such a perilous remedy.

I will conclude with a general idea that includes within it not only all the particular ideas that have been expressed in this present chapter, but also most of those that this book has the purpose of putting forth.

[What was above all to be feared formerly is no longer to be feared and new dangers have arisen that our fathers did not know.][w]

In the centuries of aristocracy that preceded ours, there were very powerful individuals and a very feeble social authority. The very image of society was obscure and was constantly lost amid all the different powers that governed the citizens. The principal effort of the men of that time had to be to proceed to make the social power greater and to fortify it, to increase and to assure its prerogatives, and on the contrary, to restrict individual independence within more narrow limits, and to subordinate particular interest to the general interest.

v. In the margin of the copy: "<Where the passing sentiments that revolution suggests find themselves in sympathy with the permanent sentiments that equality gives.>"

w. In the margin of the copy: "Perhaps delete that?"

Other dangers and other concerns await the men of today.

Among most modern nations, the sovereign power, whatever its origin, its constitution and its name, has become almost omnipotent, and individuals fall more and more into the final degree of weakness and dependency.

Everything was different in the old societies. Unity and uniformity were found nowhere. In our societies, everything threatens to become so similar, that the particular figure of each individual will soon be lost entirely in the common physiognomy. Our fathers were always ready to abuse this idea that particular rights are worthy of respect, and we are naturally led to exaggerate this other, that the interest of one individual must always yield before the interest of several.

The political world is changing; from now on we must seek new remedies for new evils.

To fix for the social power extensive, but visible and immobile limits; to give to individuals certain rights and to guarantee to them the uncontested enjoyment of these rights; to preserve for the individual the little of independence, of strength and of originality that remain to him; to raise him up beside society and sustain him in the face of it: such seems to me to be the first goal of the legislator in the age we are entering.[x]

It could be said that the sovereigns of today only seek to create great things with men. I would like them to think a bit more about creating great men, to attach less value to the work and more to the worker,[y] and

x. "I would very much like you to tell me what makes the grandeur of man if it is not man himself./

"Who the devil does it concern except each one of us?" (*Rubish,* 2).

y. They limit themselves to wanting society to be great; I, man; they are interested in an ideal being, without a body; I, in God's creature, in my fellow man./

They attach more value to the work; I, to the worker./

To raise up and to make the individual greater, constant goal of great men in democratic centuries./

This 29 January 1838 (*Rubish,* 2).

Another rough draft expresses the same thought:

How will we be able to understand each other? I seek to live with dignity and honor, and you only seek to live.

to remember constantly that a nation cannot long remain strong when each man is individually weak, and that we have not yet found either social forms or political combinations that can create an energetic people by bringing together faint-hearted and soft citizens.[z]

I see among our contemporaries two opposite but equally fatal ideas.

Some see in equality only the anarchical tendencies that it engenders. They fear their free will; they are afraid of themselves.

The others, in smaller number, but better enlightened, have another view. Alongside the road that, starting at equality, leads to anarchy, they have finally found the path that seems to lead men invincibly toward servitude; they bend their soul in advance to this necessary servitude; and despairing of remaining free, they already adore at the bottom of their heart the master who must soon come.

The first abandon liberty because they consider it dangerous; the second because they judge it impossible.

If I had had this last belief, I would not have written the work that you

What you fear most from the democratic social state are the political troubles that it brings forth, and me, that is what I fear least about it. You dread democratic liberty, and I democratic despotism.

These men who, similar to domestic animals, worry little about having a master provided that the master feeds them, and who seek in life only to live.

[In the margin: Many men consider democratic civil laws as an evil and democratic political laws as another and the greatest evil; but I say that the one is the sole remedy that you can apply to the other.

All the idea of my politics is in this remark] (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 53–54).

z. The manuscript and the copy of the chapter finish here. In the margin of the manuscript you find this note:

I can and perhaps I must stop here. I see vaguely, however, that there would be something more, and more striking to add, for finally I am still speaking in all that precedes only about the interest of society and not about that of the individual himself. Now, is not all the grandeur of man in the grandeur of the individual rather than in the grandeur of society, which is an ideal being produced from the mind of man? Society is made for the individual and not the individual for society. By what a strange reversal of things would you arrive at sacrificing the individual with the view of favoring society, and what singular detachment from himself would lead this last to acquiesce in such an attempt?

have just read; I would have limited myself to bemoaning in secret the destiny of my fellow men.

I wanted to put forth in full light the risks that equality makes human independence run, because I believe firmly that these risks are the most formidable as well as the least foreseen of all those that the future holds.[a] But I do not believe them insurmountable.

The men who live in the democratic centuries that we are entering naturally have the taste for independence.[b] Naturally they bear rules with impatience: the permanence of even the state they prefer wearies them. They love power; but they are inclined to scorn and to hate the one who exercises it, and they easily escape from between his hands because of their smallness and their very mobility.

These instincts will always be found, because they emerge from the core of the social state which will not change. For a long time they will prevent any despotism from being able to become established, and they will provide new weapons to each new generation that wants to fight in favor of the liberty of men.

So let us have for the future this salutary fear that makes us vigilant and combative, and not this sort of soft and idle terror that weakens and enervates hearts.[c]

a. The great men of paganism have often willingly sacrificed to false gods [v: idols] in which they did not believe, because they knew that peoples could imagine only under this crude image the idea of the divinity, one and supreme, belief in which is necessary to humanity.

In the same way statesmen, who know that legality is not *order* [v: is only the external form of order and not order], must however honor it [v: bend their knees before it] as the only permanent image of order that can be grasped by the organs of the common people [*vulgarius*] (*Rubish,* 2).

b. Idea of the [blank (ed.)] to show that the taste for *independence* is natural to men in times of equality and why; but that it is a secondary taste almost always subordinate to the taste for *power;* that this natural tendency toward liberty is however our anchor of salvation; that it is by developing it and by making it practical and manly that you can hope to obtain all the good of equality without its evils (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 49).

c. "It is a matter above all of proving that it is with the help of *liberty* that you can hope to prevent *license.* Everything is there. Fear must be put on the side of liberty if you want to succeed" (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 52–53).

CHAPTER 8[a]

General View of the Subject[b]

a. In the first box of the *Rubish* (*Rubish,* 1), with the chapter on material enjoyments, in a jacket bearing the title HOW EQUALITY OF RANKS SUGGESTS TO MEN THE TASTE FOR LIBERTY AND FOR EQUALITY, you find this note: "Perhaps finish by a chapter entitled GENERAL VIEW OF THE SUBJECT, in which I recall the fatal march of equality. Perhaps here I will show that it is only by democracy that you can attenuate the evils of democracy, the impossibility and the danger of the government of the middle classes, the necessity to aim firmly for the government of all by all." (*Rubish,* 1). In the second box of the *Rubish,* the rough drafts and notes of this chapter are accompanied by various papers contained in a jacket that has as a title OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS ACT VIS-À-VIS ASSOCIATIONS. Tocqueville noted to the side: "I propose to delete this chapter." The ideas of these pages are found in different places in the last chapters.

b. [On a jacket: Last chapter. General view of the subject./

General appraisal of the effects of equality./

I can [only (ed.)] approach this summary frankly and grandly, otherwise it would seem out of place and incomplete. I must show myself wanting to reduce the entire picture that I have just painted to a narrow frame, setting aside details, or closing my eyes to them, no longer occupying myself with America, which opened the path to me; and after thus preparing the reader for something very general and with very few details, to keep the piece: I look at my country . . .

To begin by recalling the march of the four volumes.]

Capital and principal idea./

Influence of democracy on human morality.

Medium morality, perhaps in the view of God.

Interest which gains, men not virtuous, but steady.

Final chapter. I think. All of man is there./

Chapter too vast, too thorny. To refrain probably.

[On the following page] A final chapter.

Less individual independence, more national strength.

Less independence, more security.

Less independence of the sovereign, more independence of the subjects.

[On the following page] I do not believe in the definitive organization of the government of the middle classes, and if I believed it possible, I would oppose myself to it.

Before leaving forever the course that I have just covered, I would like to be able to encompass with a last look all the various features that mark the face of the new world, and finally to judge the general influence that equal-

Idea to put in the place where I show again the fatal march of equality.

[Here we omit several paragraphs (ed.).]

[On the following page] Finish the book by a great chapter that tries to summarize all the *democratic* subject and to draw from it *oratorically* the consequences for the world and in particular for Europe and us. Maxims of *conciliation,* of resignation, of union with the march of Providence, complete impartiality.

A simple and solemn movement, like the subject./

Capital idea.

That it is necessary to draw yourself out of particular points of view in order to place yourself, if possible, in general points of view that do not depend on either times or places. Penetrate as deeply as possible into the thought of God and judge from there.

[On the following page] Use democracy to moderate democracy. That is the sole path of salvation that is open to us. Discern the sentiments, the ideas, the laws that, without being hostile to the principles of democracy, without being naturally incompatible with democracy, can however correct its unfortunate tendencies and, while modifying it, become incorporated with it.

Beyond that everything is foolish and imprudent (YTC, CVk, 2, pp. 50–52).

In Tocqueville's papers you find these other plans:

Presumed order of the last chapter.

1. Summary of the four volumes.

2. Why democracy, certain sides of which a (illegible word), can be the best state in the eyes of God.

3. From now on democracy has nothing to fear except itself.

4. *Bad* and *good* democracy and if it must be *assured.*

It is from its ranks that its masters and its destroyers will come. It has nothing to fear from its enemies, but from its children (YTC, CVc, pp. 59–60).

Last chapter.

I said when beginning that the march of equality was irresistible. I believe it more and more. Movement of the rest of Europe as democratic by kings, as ours by the people. There is only one aristocracy that knows how to defend itself, that of England. All the others form command staffs without armies.

General fact flowing from the development of equality . . .

More honesty, fewer virtues.

Each man smaller, more ignorant, weaker, humanity greater, stronger, more knowledgeable.

Smaller individual efforts, a greater general result.

Less tranquillity, more power (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 4).

ity must exercise on the fate of men; but the difficulty of such an enterprise stops me; in the presence of such a great matter, I feel my sight fail and my reason falter.[c]

This new society, which I have sought to portray and which I want to judge, has only just been born. Time has not yet set its form; the great revolution that created it is still going on, and in what is happening today, it is nearly impossible to discern what must pass away with the revolution itself, and what must remain after it.

The world that is rising is still half caught in the ruins of the world that is falling, and amid the immense confusion presented by human affairs, no one can say which old institutions and ancient mores will remain standing and which will finally disappear.

Although the revolution that is taking place in the social state, the laws, the ideas, the sentiments of men, is still very far from being finished, already you cannot compare its works with anything that has been seen previously in the world. I go back century by century to the most distant antiquity; I notice nothing that resembles what is before our eyes. Since the past no longer clarifies the future, the mind moves in shadows.

But amid this picture so vast, so new, so confused, I already glimpse a few principal features which are becoming apparent and I point them out.

I see that the good and the bad are distributed equally enough in the world. Great wealth disappears; the number of small fortunes increases; desires and enjoyments multiply; there is no more extraordinary prosperity or irreversible poverty. Ambition is a universal sentiment; there are few vast ambitions. Each individual is isolated and weak; society is agile, far-sighted and strong; individuals do small things and the State immense ones.

Souls are not energetic; but mores are mild and legislation humane. If little great devotion, few very high, very brilliant, and very pure virtues are

c. In the margin: "<I cast my eyes over my country and I see there a universal transformation. I widen my view, I carry it by degrees to the extreme limits of the vast space occupied on the globe by the European race; everywhere I am struck by an analogous spectacle. Among all peoples, ancient institutions and ancient mores have disappeared or are disappearing in order to give place to something different. Everything that exists today [interrupted text (ed.)].>"

found, habits are steady, violence is rare and cruelty almost unknown. The lives of men become longer and their property more secure. Life is not very ornate, but very comfortable and very peaceful. There are few very delicate and very coarse pleasures, little courtesy in manners and little brutality in tastes. You scarcely find very learned men or very ignorant populations. Genius becomes rarer and enlightenment more common. The human mind is developed by the small combined efforts of all men, and not by the powerful impulse of a few of them. There is less perfection, but more fecundity in works. All the bonds of race, class, country are loosening; the great bond of humanity is tightening.[d]

If among all these various features, I seek the one that seems to me the most general and the most striking, I come to see that what is noticeable in fortunes reappears again in a thousand other forms. Nearly all the extremes become softer and are blunted; nearly all the salient points are worn away to make way for something middling, which is at the very same time less high and less low, less brilliant and less obscure than what was seen in the world.[e]

I run my eyes over this innumerable crowd composed of similar beings, in which nothing either rises or falls. The spectacle of this universal uniformity [and of this mediocrity] saddens me and chills me, and I am tempted to regret the society that is no more.

d. In the margin: "<This picture seems good enough to me, but it is incomplete. It perhaps contains some useless things, and there are some necessary ones to .-.-. To complete it, it is necessary to have gone through the whole book.>"

e. It is necessary to find in some part of the work, in the foreword or the last chapter, the idea of the *middle* that has been so dishonored in our times. Show that there is a firm, clear, voluntary way to see and to grasp the truth between two extremes. To conceive and to say that the truth is not in an absolute system.

[In the margin: I do not like the middle to be taken between grandeur and baseness, between courage and fear, between vice and virtue. But I like the middle between two opposite *excesses.]*

Dare to say somewhere the idea of L[ouis (ed.)]. that a difference must be made between absolute affirmation [v: certitude] and Pyrrhonism, that the system of probabilities is the only true one, the only *human* one, provided that probability causes you to act as energetically as certitude.

All that is poorly said, but the germ is there (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 41–42).

When the world was filled with very great and very small, very rich and very poor, very learned and very ignorant, [very fortunate and very miserable] men, I turned my eyes away from the second to fix them only on the first, and the latter delighted my sight. But I understand that this pleasure arose from my weakness; it is because I cannot see all that surrounds me at the same time that I am allowed to choose in this way and to separate, among so many objects, those that it pleases me to consider. It is not the same for the all-powerful and eternal Being, whose eyes necessarily take in the whole of things, and who sees all of humanity and each man distinctly, though at the same time.

It is natural to believe that what most satisfies the sight of this creator and preserver of men, is not the singular prosperity of a few, but the greatest well-being of all; so what seems to me decline, is in his eyes progress; what hurts me, agrees with him. Equality is perhaps less elevated; but it is more just, and its justice makes its grandeur and its beauty.

I try hard to enter into this point of view of God, and from there I seek to consider and to judge human things.[f]

No one, on the earth, can yet assert in an absolute and general way that the new state of societies is superior to the old state; but it is already easy to see that it is different.

There are certain vices and certain virtues that were attached to the constitution of aristocratic nations and that are so contrary to the genius of the new peoples that you cannot introduce those vices and virtues among them. There are good tendencies and bad instincts that were foreign to the first that are natural to the second; ideas that occur by themselves to the imagination of the first and that the mind of the second rejects. They are like two distinct humanities, each of which has its particular advantages and disadvantages, its good and its evil which are its own.[g]

So you must be very careful about judging the societies that are being

f. "Who knows if, in the eyes of God, the beautiful is not the useful?" (YTC, CVa, p. 41).

g. "You must not aim to make democratic peoples as similar as possible to aristocratic nations, but to gain for them as much as possible the type of grandeur and prosperity that is appropriate to them" (*Rubish,* 2).

born by the ideas that you have drawn from those that are no longer. That would be unjust, for these societies, differing prodigiously from each other, are not comparable.

It would be scarcely more reasonable to ask of the men [v. democratic peoples] of today the particular virtues that resulted from the social state of their ancestors, since this social state itself has fallen, and since in its fall it swept away in a confused way all the good and all the bad that it carried with it.

But these things are still poorly understood today.

I notice a great number of my contemporaries who undertake to make a choice among the institutions, the opinions, the ideas that arose from the aristocratic constitution of the former society; they would willingly abandon some, but they would still like to retain others and carry them with them into the new world.

I think that those men use up their time and their strength in an honest and sterile work.

It is no longer a matter of retaining the particular advantages that inequality of conditions gains for men, but of assuring the new advantages that equality can offer them.[h] We must not aim to make ourselves similar to our fathers, but to work hard to attain the type of grandeur and happiness that is appropriate to us.

As for me, having reached the final end of my journey, I discern from afar, but all at once, all the various matters that I had contemplated sepa-

h. Equality of conditions, the absence of classes . . . are evils you say. It belittles human nature, establishes the mediocre in everything. Perhaps you are right.

Do you know a means to cure the evil by the opposites, that is to say by the reestablishment or even the maintaining of inequality, the permanent classification of men? No. At the very bottom of your heart you do not believe in the possibility of all these things.

But admitting that equality of conditions is an invincible fact, you contest its consequences in the political world; and you attack liberty and call despotism to your aid, and seek to assure present security at the expense of future races.

And it is here that you are clearly wrong. For there is only democracy (by this word I mean self-government) that can diminish and make bearable the inevitable evils of a democratic social state.

5 September 1837 (YTC, CVk, 2, p. 53).

rately while going along, and I feel full of fears and full of hopes.[j] I see great dangers that it is possible to avert, great evils that can be avoided or limited; and I become more and more confirmed in this belief that, to be honest and prosperous, it is still enough for democratic nations to want to be so.

I am not unaware that several of my contemporaries have thought that here below peoples are never masters of themselves, and that they obey necessarily I do not know what insurmountable and unintelligent force that arises from previous events, from race, from soil, or from climate.[k]

j. I see two distinct roads that open at the same time before the men of today. They touch at first, but as they get farther from the common point of departure, they move away from each other and an immense space between them is found at the end. The one leads to liberty and the other leads to servitude. And as you march along one or along the other, liberty becomes greater and servitude heavier. Each day that the space separating them expands, it is more difficult to cross it to find the good road again. Peoples have not yet reached the place where they must choose between these two paths. But all are getting closer to it. An irresistible force is pushing them there. I already see the first advancing. The others follow the first at unequal distances.

Although I may be the last one in this holy league, if it is forming, I am content.

Some push them toward chaos, the others drag them, little by little and without noticing, perhaps, toward the most stupefying of all servitudes. The nations hesitate, become disturbed and falter . . .

Oh! Who will open the way, who will carry the new banner, who will give his name to this glorious dawning. One man, whoever he may be, cannot do it, but an association of men could do so. Association of disinterested, honest or enterprising men (illegible word) sentiments . . . I will be distressed by them, but let me be allowed to say that I am not afraid of them.

As for my opinions on all the others, I do not defend myself; the public is the judge.

[On another page] I said at the beginning of this long work that peoples (vol. 1, p. 90) could draw two great political consequences from the democratic social state, that these consequences differed prodigiously from each other, but that they both emerged from the same fact. Here I am at the end of my course, and I feel myself more firm in this belief (YTC, CVd, pp. 20–22). Tocqueville is referring to the last paragraphs of chapter III of the first part of the first volume (p. 90).

k. Idea of *necessity,* of fatality. Explain how my system differs essentially from that of Chiquet [Mignet (ed.)] and company. Do a satirical portrait of the latter without naming individuals. Show that without claiming to be [a (ed.)] genius who embraces the necessities of the political order, there is a great weakness of mind and a great distaste for work. Explain how my system is perfectly compatible with human liberty.

Those are false and cowardly doctrines that can produce only weak men and pusillanimous nations. Providence has created humanity neither entirely independent nor completely slave. It traces around each man, it is true, a fatal circle out of which he cannot go; but within its vast limits, man is powerful and free; so are peoples.[m]

The nations of today cannot make conditions among them not be equal; but it depends on them whether equality leads them to servitude or liberty, to enlightenment or barbarism, to prosperity or misery.[n]

Apply these general ideas to democracy.

That is a very beautiful piece to place at the head or the tail of the work.

[In the margin: You have not reproached me as I anticipated for seeming to fall into the *mania* of the century. But I reproach myself for it because I do not want to fall into it. You absolve me, and I accuse myself. I wake up every morning obeying a general and eternal law that I did not know the night before.

Unfortunately, there are some of those laws] (YTC, CVa, pp. 58–59).

And in the same line:

To be very careful in the preliminary or final chapter to make it clearly understood that I am not exclusive in my point of view. Many particular causes like climate, race, religion influence the ideas and the sentiments of men, independently of the social state.

[To the side: The progress of enlightenment (illegible word), principal idea that I have constantly found on my road and at which I have not wanted to stop.]

The particular purpose of this book is not to deny these influences, but to put into relief the particular influence of the social state.

January 1838 (YTC, CVk, 1, pp. 47–48).

m. "I am profoundly convinced that democracy can be regulated and organized; it is not something easy, but it is something that can be done, and I add that it is the only thing left to do" (YTC, CVd, p. 19).

n. "A man is never *master* of his destiny because death can come to seize him in the execution of his wisest plans, but a people, which does not perish, remains always master of itself" (*Rubish,* 2).

Notes

Page 975

There are, however, aristocracies that have engaged in commerce with ardor and cultivated industry with success. The history of the world provides several striking examples. But in general it must be said that aristocracy is not favorable to the development of industry and of commerce. Only aristocracies of money are an exception to this rule.

Among the latter there is hardly any desire that does not need wealth to be satisfied. The love of wealth becomes, so to speak, the great highway for human passions. All the other passions lead to it or cross it.

The taste for money and the thirst for consideration and power then blend so well in the same souls that it becomes difficult to discern if it is out of ambition that men are greedy, or if it is out of greediness that they are ambitious. This is what happens in England, where you want to be rich in order to attain honors, and where you desire honors as the manifestation of wealth. The human spirit is then gripped on all sides and swept toward commerce and industry, which are the shortest roads that lead to opulence.

Moreover, this seems to me an exceptional and transitory fact. When wealth has become the only sign of aristocracy, it is very difficult for the rich to maintain themselves in power alone and to exclude all the others.

Aristocracy of birth and pure democracy are at the two extremes of the social and political state of nations; in the middle is found the aristocracy of money:[a] the latter is close to the aristocracy of birth in that it confers

a. "≠The aristocracy of money does not seem lasting to me. This form of society has something at the very same time of both aristocracy and democracy, and it leads from the one to the other by a more or less slow but inevitable march≠" (YTC, CVk, 1, p. 86).

great privileges on a small number of citizens; it is close to democracy in that the privileges can be successively acquired by all; it often forms like a natural transition between these two things, and you cannot say if it brings the reign of aristocratic institutions to an end, or if it already opens the new era of democracy.

Page 1050

I find in the journal of my trip the following piece, which will completely reveal the trials to which the women of America who agree to accompany their husbands into the wilderness are subjected. There is nothing that commends this picture to the reader except its great truth.[b]

. . . From time to time we came across new clearings. All these establishments were similar. I am going to describe the one where we stopped this evening; it will leave me with a picture of all the others.

The small bell that the pioneers carefully hang around the necks of the animals in order to find them in the woods announced to us from afar the approach to a clearing; soon we heard the sound of the ax that fells the trees of the forest. As we approach, signs of destruction announce to us the presence of civilized man. Cut branches cover the road; trunks half-charred by fire or mutilated by the ax still stand upright along our passage. We continue our march and we come to a woods in which all the trees seem to have been stricken by sudden death; in the middle of the summer, they present nothing more than the image of winter; examining them more closely we notice that in their bark a deep circle has been traced that, stopping the circulation of the sap, did not take long to make them die; we learn that this, in fact, is how the pioneer usually begins. Not able, during the first year, to cut all the trees that cover his new property, he sows corn under their branches and, by killing them, he prevents them from shading his crop. After this field, an incomplete beginning, a first step of civilization in the wilderness, we suddenly notice the cabin of the landowner; it is placed in the center of a ground more carefully cultivated than the rest, but

b. See pp. 1314–16 of Appendix II.

where man still sustains an unequal struggle against the forest. There the trees are cut, but not uprooted; their trunks still cover and clutter the ground that they formerly shaded. Around these dried-up remains, wheat, oak shoots, plants of all types, grasses of all kinds grow jumbled together and increase together on an intractable and half-wild ground. At the center of this vigorous and varied vegetation arises the house of the pioneer, or as it is called in this country, the *log house.* Like the field that surrounds it, this rustic dwelling announces a new and hurried work; its length does not seem to us to exceed thirty feet; its height, fifteen; its walls as well as the roof are formed from tree trunks not squared off, between which moss and earth have been placed to prevent the cold and the rain from penetrating the interior.

Since night was approaching, we determined to go to ask the owner of the *log house* for shelter.

At the sound of our steps, the children who were rolling around amid the debris of the forest get up precipitously and flee toward the house as if frightened at the sight of a man, while two large half-wild dogs, ears upright and muzzles elongated, emerge from their cabin and come growling to cover the retreat of their young masters. The pioneer himself appears at the door of his dwelling; he casts a rapid and searching glance at us, signals to his dogs to come back into the house; he serves as their example himself without showing that our sight excites his curiosity or his concern.

We enter the *log house.* The interior does not recall the cabins of the peasants of Europe; you find more of the superfluous and less of the necessary.

There is only a single window at which hangs a muslin curtain; on a hearth of beaten earth crackles a great fire that lights up the whole interior of the building; above this hearth you notice a beautiful rifle with a grooved barrel, a deer skin, eagle feathers; to the right of the chimney a map of the United States is spread which the wind flaps and agitates by coming through the chinks in the wall; near it, on a shelf made from a rough-hewn plank, are placed a few volumes. I notice the Bible, the first six cantos of Milton and two plays of Shakespeare. Along the walls are placed trunks instead of armoires; in the center is found a crudely worked table, whose

feet, made from wood still green and with the bark still on, seem to have grown by themselves out of the earth on the spot occupied by the table; I see on this table a teapot of English porcelain, some silver spoons, a few chipped cups and some newspapers.

The master of this dwelling has the angular features and slender limbs that distinguish the inhabitant of New England; it is clear that this man was not born in the wilderness where we meet him; his physical constitution is enough to announce that his first years were spent within an intellectual society, and that he belongs to this restless, reasoning and adventurous race that does coldly what only the ardor of the passions explains and which subjects itself for a time to uncivilized life the better to conquer and to civilize the wilderness.

When the pioneer sees that we are crossing the threshold of his dwelling, he comes to meet us and extends his hand, as is the custom; but his physiognomy remains rigid; he speaks first to interrogate us about what is happening in the world, and when he has satisfied his curiosity, he becomes silent; you would think him fatigued by troublesome individuals and by chatter. We interrogate him in turn, and he gives us all the information we need; then he occupies himself without eagerness but diligently with providing for our needs. Seeing him devote himself in this way to these kind attentions, why, despite ourselves, do we feel our gratitude cool? It is because he, while exercising hospitality, seems to be submitting to a painful necessity of his fate; he sees a duty that his position imposes on him, not a pleasure.

At the other end of the room is seated a woman who is rocking a young child on her knees. She nods to us without interrupting herself. Like the pioneer, this woman is in the prime of life; her appearance seems superior to her condition; her dress still announces even now a barely extinguished taste for finery; but her delicate limbs seem weakened; her features are tired; her eyes gentle and serious. You see spread over her whole physiognomy a religious resignation, a profound peace of the passions, and I do not know what natural and tranquil steadfastness that meets all the evils of life without fearing them or defying them.

Her children crowd around her; they are full of health, excitement, and energy; they are true sons of the wilderness. Their mother from time to

time gives them looks full of melancholy and joy. To see their strength and her weakness, you would say that she has exhausted herself by giving them life, and that she does not regret what they have cost her.

The house inhabited by the emigrants has no interior wall or attic. Into the single room that it contains, the entire family comes to find shelter at night. This dwelling by itself alone forms like a small world; it is the ark of civilization lost amid an ocean of leaves. One hundred steps further the eternal forest spreads its shadow and the wilderness begins again.

Page 1052

It is not equality of conditions that makes men immoral and irreligious. But when men are immoral and irreligious at the same time as being equal, the effects of immorality and irreligion occur in the open easily because men have little influence on each other and because no class exists that can take charge of keeping order in society. Equality of conditions never creates corruption of morals, but sometimes it allows it to happen.

Pages 1085–87

If you put aside all those who do not think and those who dare not say what they think, you will still find that the immense majority of Americans seem satisfied with the political institutions that govern them; and in fact, I believe that they are. I regard this cast of public opinion as an indication, but not as a proof of the absolute goodness of American laws. National pride, the satisfaction given by the laws to certain dominant passions, fortuitous events, unnoticed vices, and more than all of that the interest of a majority that silences those who oppose it, can for a long time delude an entire people as well as one man.

See England in the whole course of the XVIIIth century. Never did a nation lavish more praise on itself; no people was ever more perfectly content with itself; everything then was good in its constitution, everything

there was irreproachable, even its most visible faults. Today a multitude of Englishmen seems to be busy only with proving that this constitution was defective in a thousand places. Who was right, the English people of the last century, or the English people of today?

The same thing happened in France. It is certain that under Louis XIV the great mass of the nation was passionate about the form of government that then ruled society. They are very much mistaken who believe that the French character of that time was debased. In that century in France, there could be servitude in certain respects, but the spirit of servitude was certainly not found. The writers of the time felt a sort of real enthusiasm in raising the royal power above all others, and there was no one, even including the obscure peasant in his cottage, who did not take pride in the glory of the sovereign and who did not die with joy while crying: "Long live the King!" These same forms have become odious to us. Who was wrong, the French of Louis XIV, or the French of today?

So it is not only on the predispositions of a people that you must rely in order to judge its laws, since from one century to another they change, but on more elevated grounds and a more general experience.

The love that a people shows for its laws proves only one thing: that you must not hasten to change them.

Page 1169

In the chapter to which this note relates I have just shown one danger; I want to point out another rarer one, but one that, if it ever appeared, would be very much more to fear.

If the love of material enjoyments and the taste for well-being that equality naturally suggests to men, while taking hold of the spirit of a democratic people, came to fill them entirely, national mores would become so antipathetic to the military spirit that armies themselves would perhaps end up loving peace despite the particular interest that leads them to desire war. Placed in the middle of this universal softness, soldiers would come to think that it was indeed better to rise gradually, but comfortably and without efforts, in peace, than to buy a rapid advancement at the cost of the strains

and the miseries of camp life. In this spirit, the army would take up arms without zeal and would use them without energy; it would allow itself to be led to the enemy rather than marching there by itself.

You must not believe that this pacific inclination of the army would distance it from revolutions, for revolutions, and above all military revolutions, which are usually very quick, often carry great risks, but do not require extended efforts; they satisfy ambition at less cost than war; in revolutions you only risk your life, to which the men of democracies are less attached than to their comforts.

There is nothing more dangerous for the liberty and the tranquillity of a people than an army that is afraid of war, because, no longer seeking its grandeur and its influence on the fields of battle, it wants to find them elsewhere. So it could happen that the men who compose a democratic army would lose the interests of the citizen without gaining the virtues of the soldier, and that the army would cease to be warlike without ceasing to be turbulent.

I will repeat here what I already said above. The remedy for such dangers is not in the army, but in the country. A democratic people that maintains manly mores will always as needed find warrior mores in its soldiers.

Page 1200

Men put the grandeur of the idea of unity in the means; God, in the end; the result is that this idea of grandeur leads us to a thousand petty things. To force all men to march with the same step, toward the same purpose, that is a human idea. To introduce an infinite variety in actions, but to combine them so that all these actions lead by a thousand paths toward the accomplishment of a great design, that is a divine idea.

The human idea of unity is almost always sterile; that of God, immensely fruitful. Men think to attest to their grandeur by simplifying the means. It is the purpose of God which is simple, His means vary infinitely.[c]

c. "Every uniform rule is necessarily tyrannical because men are never alike" (UNITY, CENTRALIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE DESPOTISM, *Rubish,* 2).

Page 1206

A democratic people is not only led by its tastes to centralize power; the passions of all those who lead it push it there constantly.

You can easily predict that almost all of the ambitious and capable citizens contained within a democratic country will work without let-up to expand the attributions of the social power, because all hope to direct it one day. It is a waste of time to want to prove to those men that extreme centralization can harm the State, since they are centralizing for themselves.

Among the public men of democracies, there are hardly any men except those who are very disinterested or very mediocre who want to decentralize power. The first are rare and the others powerless.

Page 1247

I have often asked myself what would happen if, amid the softness of democratic mores and as a result of the restless spirit of the army, a military government was ever established among some of the nations of today.

I think that the government itself would not be far from the portrait that I drew in the chapter to which this note relates, and that it would not reproduce the savage features of the military oligarchy.

I am persuaded that in this case there would be a kind of fusion between the habits of the clerk and those of the soldier. The administration would take on something of the military spirit, and the military some of the practices of the civil administration. The result of this would be a regular, clear, plain, absolute command; the people made into the image of the army, and society kept like a barracks.

Page 1260–61

You cannot say in an absolute and general way that the greatest danger of today is license or tyranny, anarchy or despotism. Both are equally to be

feared and can emerge as easily from the same single cause, which is *general apathy,* fruit of individualism; this apathy means that the day when the executive power gathers some strength, it is able to oppress, and that the day after, when a party can put thirty men in the field, the latter is equally able to oppress. Since neither the one nor the other is able to establish anything lasting, what makes them succeed easily prevents them from succeeding for long. They arise because nothing resists them, and they fall because nothing sustains them.

What is important to combat is therefore much less anarchy or despotism than apathy, which can create almost indifferently the one or the other.

APPENDIX I

Journey to Lake Oneida[a]

On July 8, 1831, at sunrise, we left the small village called Fort Brewerton, and we began to advance toward the northeast.

About one mile from the house of our host, a path opens in the forest; we hastened to take it. The heat was beginning to become uncomfortable. After a windy night had followed a morning without any cool breeze. Soon we found ourselves sheltered from the rays of the sun and in the middle of one of these deep forests of the New World whose somber and wild majesty grips the imagination and fills the soul with a sort of religious terror.

How to paint such a spectacle? On a marshy terrain where a thousand small streams, not yet imprisoned by the hand of man, run and are lost in liberty, nature has scattered pell-mell and with an incredible profusion the seeds of nearly all the plants that creep on the earth or rise above the soil.

Over our heads was spread as it were a vast dome of greenery. Under this thick veil and amid the humid depths of the woods, the eye saw an immense confusion; a sort of chaos. Trees of all ages, foliage of all colors, herbs, fruits, flowers of a thousand species, intermingled, intertwined in the same places. Generations of trees have followed each other there with-

a. *Journey to Lake Oneida* and *A Fortnight in the Wilderness* were written by Tocqueville during his journey in America. If he had not wanted to publish them, it was because he was concerned about not entering into competition on this point with Beaumont. *Journey to Lake Oneida* was published for the first time by Beaumont in *Œuvres et correspondance inédites d'Alexis de Tocqueville, OCB,* V, pp. 161–71. It has recently been included in *Voyages en Sicile et aux États-Unis, OC,* V, 1, pp. 336–41. Tocqueville presented a first version in a letter of 25 July 1831 to his sister-in-law, Alexandrine (reproduced with some modifications in *OCB,* VII, pp. 39–45). The family archives contain a copy of the text in the hand of Mary Mottley and corrected by Tocqueville. The episode also appears in *Marie,* II, pp. 45–46 and 329.

out interruption for centuries, and the earth is covered with their remains. Some seem struck down yesterday; others, already half settled into the earth, present nothing more than a hollow and flat surface; others finally are reduced to dust and serve as fertilizer for their last shoots. In the midst of them a thousand diverse plants hasten to emerge in their turn. They slip between these immobile cadavers, creep along their surface, penetrate beneath their withered bark, lift up and scatter their powdery remains.[b] It is like a struggle between death and life. Sometimes, we happened to encounter an immense tree that the wind had uprooted, but the rows are so close together in the forest that, despite its weight, it was not able to make it to the ground. It still balanced its dry branches in the air.

A solemn silence reigned amid this solitude; you saw only a few or no animated creatures, man was missing and yet it was not a desert. Everything, on the contrary, showed a productive force in nature unknown elsewhere; everything was activity; the air seemed impregnated with an odor of vegetation. It seemed as if you heard an internal noise that revealed the work of creation and as if you saw sap and life circulating in always open channels.

It was amid this imposing solitude and in the light of an uncertain day that we walked for several hours, without hearing any noise other than that made by our horses trampling underfoot the leaves piled up by several winters or pushing with difficulty through the dry branches that covered the path. We kept silent ourselves, our souls were filled with the grandeur and the novelty of the spectacle. Finally we heard the echo of the first blows of an ax which announced in the distance the presence of a European. Felled trees, burned and blackened trunks, some plants useful to the life of man sown amid a confused mixture of a hundred various remnants, led us to the habitation of the pioneer. At the center of a rather narrow circle drawn

b. Several of these sentences are found word for word in the *Democracy.* Cf. pp. 37–38 of the first volume and 459–61 of the second volume.

around it by iron and fire arose the crude house of the forerunner of European civilization. It was like the oasis in the middle of the desert.

After conversing a few moments with the inhabitant of this place, we resumed our course and a half-hour later we arrived at a fisherman's cabin built on the very shores of the lake that we were coming to visit.

Lake Oneida is situated in the middle of low hills and at the center of still respectable forests. A belt of thick foliage surrounds it on all sides, and its waters moisten the roots of trees that are reflected in its transparent and tranquil surface. The isolated cabin of a fisherman rose alone on its shores. Moreover, no sail appeared on its entire surface; you did not even see smoke rise above its woods, for the European, without having completely taken possession of its banks, had already approached closely enough to exile the numerous and warlike tribe that had once given the lake its name.

About one mile from the shore on which we stood were two islands, oval in form and of equal length. These islands are covered by a wood so thick that it entirely conceals the earth that supports it; you would say two clumps of trees floating peacefully on the surface of the lake.

No road passes near this place; you do not see in these regions great industrial establishments, or places famous for their picturesque beauty. Yet it was not chance that had led us close to this solitary lake. It was on the contrary the goal and the end of our journey.

Already many years ago, a book entitled *Journey to Lake Oneida* had fallen into my hands.[c] The author told about a young Frenchman and his

c. Sophie von la Roche, *Erscheinungen am See Oneida* (Leipzig: H. Gräff, 1798), 3 vols. Tocqueville, who tried to learn German on several occasions, probably had a rudimentary knowledge of this language only when he was preparing the *Old Regime.* He must have read the abridged version of the book of Sophie von la Roche, which was published in French by Joachim Heinrich Campe with the title *Voyage d'un Allemand au Lac Onéida,* as part of the collection *Bibliothèque géographique et instructive des jeunes gens, ou recueil de voyages . . .* (Paris: J. E. Gabriel Dufour, 1803), X, pp. 1–170. See Victor Lange, "Visitors to Lake Oneida, An Account of the Background of Sophie von la Roche's novel 'Erscheinungen am See Oneida,' " *Symposium* 2, no. 1 (1948): 48–78. It is not the only time that the reading of a novel pushed Tocqueville to travel. The reading

wife, chased from their country by the storms of our first Revolution, who had come to seek a refuge on one of the islands that the lake surrounds with its waters.[d] There, separated from the entire universe, far from the tempests of Europe, and rejected by the society that gave them birth, these two unfortunates lived for each other, consoled each other in their misfortune.

The book had left a deep and lasting mark on my soul. Whether this effect on me was due to the talent of the author, to the real charm of events, or to the influence of age, I could not say; but the remembrance of the two French inhabitants of Lake Oneida had not faded from my memory. How many times had I not envied the tranquil delights of their solitude. The domestic happiness, the charms of the married state, love itself mingling in my mind with the image of the solitary island where my imagination had created a new Eden. This story, told to my traveling companion, had deeply moved him in turn. We often happened to talk about it, and we always ended up repeating either with laughter or with sadness: happiness in the world exists only on the shores of Lake Oneida. When events that were impossible for us to foresee posted us both to America, this memory returned to us with more force. We promised ourselves to go to visit our two French compatriots if they still existed, or at least to travel over to their dwelling-place. Admire here the strange power of the imagination over the mind of man; these wild places, this silent and immobile lake, these islands covered with greenery did not strike us as new objects; on the contrary, we seemed to see once again a place where we had passed part of our youth.

We hurried to enter the fisherman's cabin. The man was in the woods. An old woman lived there alone. She came limping to greet us at the doorway of her house. "What do you call this green island that arises a mile from here in the middle of the lake?" we said to her. "It is called French-

of *Kenilworth* by Walter Scott will be the origin of an evening excursion and of an account very similar to this one. See note e of p. 118 of the first volume.

Certain passages of this account recall the fifth promenade of [Rousseau's] *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire.*

d. "For a bit of powder and lead, they bought the island from the Indians." Letter of Tocqueville to his sister-in-law, Alexandrine (Batavia, 25 July 1831), YTC, BIa2, and *OCB,* VII, p. 40.

man's island," she answered. "Do you know why it has been given that name?" "I am told it was named this because of a Frenchman who, many years ago, came there to live." "Was he alone?" "No, he brought his young wife with him." "Do they still live in this place?" "Twenty-one years ago, when I came to settle in this place, the French were no longer on the island."[e] I recall that I had the curiosity to go to visit it. This island that appears so wild to you from here was then a beautiful place; its interior was carefully cultivated, the house of the French was placed in the middle of an orchard, surrounded by fruits and flowers. A large vinestock climbed up its walls and then surrounded it on all sides, but without an inhabitant, the house had already fallen into ruins. "So what became of the two French?" "The woman died, the man abandoned the island, and we don't know what became of him since." "Could you entrust us with the boat that is tied by your door in order to cross the part of the lake that separates us from the island?" "Very willingly, but it is a long way to row and the work is hard for men who are not used to it, and besides what could you see of interest in a place that has become wild again?"

Since we hastened, without answering her, to put the dingy in the water, she said, "I see what it is, you want to buy this island; the soil is good and land is not yet expensive in our district." We answered her that we were travelers. "Then," she started again, "you are undoubtedly relatives of the Frenchman, and he charged you with visiting his property." "Even less," we replied, "we do not even know his name."[f] The good woman shook her head with incredulity and we, maneuvering the oars, began to advance rapidly toward Frenchman's island.

During this short crossing, we kept a profound silence; our hearts were full of sweet and painful emotions. As we approached, it made less sense to us that this island could have been inhabited once, so wild were its sur-

e. In his letter to Alexandrine, Tocqueville writes instead: "and they were still there when we ourselves came, now twenty-two years ago, to live in this place." *Ibidem,* p. 41.

f. Devatines, Desvatins, De Wattines, Vatine, and others, depending on the different versions of the story. André Jardin and George Pierson (*Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 94, note 3) believe him to be a member of the family La Croix de Watines.

roundings. Little was needed for us to believe ourselves the victims of a false report. Finally we reached its bank, and slipping under the immense branches that the trees projected over the lake, we began to penetrate further. We first crossed a circle of century-old trees that seemed to defend the approach to the place. Beyond the rampart of foliage we suddenly discovered another sight. A sparse undergrowth and a young cluster of trees filled the whole interior of the island. In the forests that we had crossed in the morning, we had often seen man struggling, hand to hand, against nature, and succeeding, though with difficulty, to remove its energetic and wild character in order to bend it to his laws. Here, on the contrary, we saw the forest reclaiming its dominion, marching once again toward the conquest of the wilderness, defying man and making the fleeting traces of his victory disappear rapidly.

It was easy to recognize that a diligent hand had once cleared the place now occupied in the center of the island by the young generation of trees that I spoke about. You did not find old trunks spread over the debris. Everything there, on the contrary, smacked of youth. It was clear that the surrounding trees had grown offshoots in the middle of the abandoned fields, weeds had grown in the place that formerly supported the crop of the exile, brambles and parasitic plants had come to retake possession of their former domain. Scarcely here and there did you find the trace of a fence or the sign of a field. For an hour we tried unsuccessfully to find a few vestiges of the abandoned house in the foliage of the woods and amid the undergrowth that cluttered the ground. This rural luxury that the wife of the fisherman had just described to us, the lawn, the flowerbed, the flowers, the fruits, these products of civilization that an ingenious tenderness had introduced into the middle of a wilderness, all had disappeared with the beings who had lived there. We were going to give up our effort, when we noticed an apple tree half dead of old age; this began to put us on the track. Near there a plant that we at first took for a creeper climbed along the highest trees intertwining with their slender trunks or hanging like a garland of foliage from their branches; examining it more closely, we recognized a vinestock. Then we were able to judge with certainty that we were on the very emplacement chosen, forty years ago, by our two unfortunate compatriots to make their last refuge. But barely by digging in the

thick bed of leaves that covered the soil, were we able to find a few remnants falling into rot that in a bit of time would have ceased to exist. As for the very remains of the woman who was not afraid to exchange the delights of civilized life for a tomb in a deserted island of the New World, it was impossible for us to find a trace. Had the exile left this precious trust in the wilderness? Had he, on the contrary, carried it to the place where he himself ended his life? No one could tell us that.

Perhaps those who will read these lines will not imagine the sentiments that they recount and will treat them as exaggeration and chimera? But I will say nonetheless that, with our hearts full of emotion, agitated by fears and hopes, and animated by a sort of religious sentiment, we devoted ourselves to this minute research and pursued the traces of these two beings whose name, family and, in part, whose story were unknown to us. They attracted our attention only because they had felt in these very places the sufferings and joys that have their source in all hearts and are therefore of interest to all hearts.[g]

Is there a misery greater than that of this man!

Here is an unfortunate man whom human society has offended; his fellows have rejected, banished him and forced him to renounce their company and then to flee from them into the wilderness. A single being attached herself to his steps, followed him into seclusion, came to dress the wounds of his soul and to substitute for the joys of the world the most penetrating emotions of the heart. There he is reconciled to his destiny. He has forgotten revolutions, parties, cities, his family, his rank, his fortune; he finally breathes. His wife dies. Death comes to strike her and it spares him. Unfortunate man! What is to become of him? Is he going to remain alone in the wilderness? Will he return to a society where he has been forgotten for a long time? He is no longer made either for seclusion or for the world; he would no longer know how to live either with men or without them; he is neither a savage nor a civilized man; he is nothing but a remnant similar to those trees of the American forest that the wind has had the strength to uproot, but not to pull down; he is upright, but he is no longer living.

g. ". . . despite its natural beauty, this island by itself was of only slight interest to me; but a man had lived there, and this man was French, unfortunate and proscribed!" Beaumont, *Marie,* II, p. 329.

After traveling across the island in all directions, after visiting its slightest remnants, and after listening to the icy silence that now reigns beneath its shadows, we retook the road to the continent.[h]

Not without regret, I saw the vast rampart of greenery fade into the distance. It had for so many years known how to defend the two exiles against the European's bullet and the savage's arrow, but it was not able to hide their cottage from the invisible blows of death.[j]

h. On July 8, 1831, returning from his journey to Frenchman's Island, Tocqueville wrote: "What most intensely interested and moved me, not only since I have been in America, but also since I have traveled, is this trip." Pocket notebook 1, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 162. The emotion seems to have been so profound that henceforth solitude and melancholy would always be associated in the mind of Tocqueville with the American *wilderness.*

j. George W. Pierson, in *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America* (pp. 197–205), shows that the true history of the two French is far from the romantic version that Tocqueville learned about. The accounts of various travelers who met them indicate that the two French had arrived in America in 1786, and not at the time of the French Revolution, and that they had moved to Oneida only after being ruined in various enterprises. For some time, they inhabited the island with their three children and, far from enjoying their condition, everything leads us to believe that, on the contrary, they hoped for nothing other than to return to France. Their little appreciation for the inhabitants of the country seems to have put them on bad terms with their neighbors. They seem in the end to have found the money necessary to go back to France.

Tocqueville and Beaumont were not able to stop themselves from preferring the version of Sophie von la Roche. Like the French of this story, they left France after a revolution; their future was equally uncertain. What event could occur during their absence that would force them to become exiles in America? How not to let yourself be captivated by a drama that has as a setting an island and American nature, great and wild? Can we blame Tocqueville for having embellished the story and for having dreamed so romantically about the remains of the young French woman?

"Does the man who no longer lives have some appreciable advantage over the man who has never been?" Tocqueville asked himself in *Visit to Kenilworth.* "They both exist only by the will of those who are occupied with them. If the fictional being is more attractive than the real being, why would he occupy their thought less?" (YTC, CXIb12, and *OCB,* VII, p. 119).

APPENDIX 2

A Fortnight in the Wilderness[a]

Written aboard the steamboat "Superior."
Begun the first of August 1831.

One of the things that most intensely piqued our curiosity when coming to America was to travel across the farthest limits of European civilization and, if time permitted, even to visit a few of those Indian tribes that have preferred to flee into the most untamed wilderness than to yield to what whites call the delights of the life of society. But it is more difficult than you think to find the wilderness today. From New York, as we advanced toward the northwest, the goal of our journey seemed to flee before us. We traveled through some places famous in the history of the Indians; we encountered valleys that they named; we crossed rivers that still carry the name of their tribes, but everywhere the hut of the savage has given way to the house of the civilized man. The woods had fallen; the uninhabited places took on life.

We seemed, however, to follow in the footsteps of the natives. People said to us, ten years ago they were here; there, five years ago; there, two years ago. In the place where you see the most beautiful church of the village, a person told us, I cut down the first tree of the forest. Here, another told

a. Beaumont published *A Fortnight in the Wilderness* in the December 1, 1860, issue of the *Revue des deux mondes,* pp. 565–606. He included it afterward in his edition of the works of Tocqueville (*OCB,* V, pp. 173–258). In the new edition of the works, the text appears in the volume of the notes of the American journey (*OC,* V, 1, pp. 342–87). Also see Beaumont, *Marie,* II, pp. 56–91.

We have used the copy that exists at Yale (YTC, BIIIa), which contains variants of the version published by Beaumont.

us, the great council of the Iroquois confederation took place. "And what has become of the Indians," I said? "The Indians," our host replied, "they are beyond the Great Lakes, I do not know where. It is a race that is becoming extinct; they are not made for civilization: it kills them."

Man becomes accustomed to everything. To death on the fields of battle, to death in hospitals, to kill and to suffer. He gets used to all sights. An ancient people, the first and the legitimate master of the American continent, melts away daily like snow in the rays of the sun and disappears before your eyes from the surface of the earth. In the same areas and in its place, another race increases with a still more surprising rapidity. By this race forests fall, swamps are drained; lakes like seas, immense rivers vainly resist its triumphant march. Uninhabited places become villages, villages become cities. The daily witness to these marvels, the American sees nothing in all of that to astonish him. This unbelievable destruction, this still more surprising increase seems to him the usual course of the events of this world. He becomes accustomed to it as if to the immutable order of nature.

Thus, always in search of savages and of the wilderness, we traveled across the 360 miles that separate New York from Buffalo.

The first object that struck our eyes was a large number of Indians who had gathered that day in Buffalo to receive payment for the lands they had surrendered to the United States.

I do not believe I have ever felt a more complete disappointment than at the sight of these Indians. I was full of memories of M. de Chateaubriand[b] and of Cooper, and I expected to see, in the natives of America,

b. It was at Oneida Castle that the travelers had seen Indians for the first time. Some among them had run after their coach asking for alms. "We met the last among them on our route" writes Tocqueville to his mother about the Indians; "they ask for alms and are as inoffensive as their fathers were formidable." YTC, BIa2, and *OCB,* VII, p. 38. See Beaumont, *Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 94.

Tocqueville had elsewhere described Atala as follows:

> Concerning this, do you know what Atala or someone like her is? I must give you the description so that you can judge her resemblance to the one of *M. de Chateaubriand.* Atala is an Indian woman of a very dark *café au lait* color, whose straight and shining hair falls perfectly straight to the small of her back. She usually has a large, almost

savages on whose face nature had left the trace of some of those lofty virtues that the spirit of liberty brings forth. I thought I would find in them men whose bodies had been developed by hunting and war and who would lose nothing by being seen naked. You can judge my astonishment by comparing this portrait with the one that is about to follow:

The Indians that I saw that night were small in stature; their limbs, as much as you could judge them under their clothing, were spindly and a bit wiry; their skin, instead of presenting a tint of reddish copper, as is commonly believed, was of a bronze so dark at first glance it seemed to be very close to that of mulattos. Their black and shining hair fell with a singular straightness onto their necks and shoulders. Their mouths were in general

aquiline nose, a wide mouth equipped with gleaming teeth and two large black eyes that in daylight are quite similar to those of a cat at night. Do not think that with this natural beauty she neglects her appearance. Not at all. First of all, around her eyes, she draws a black stripe; then underneath, a beautiful red stripe; then, a blue one; then, a green one; until her face resembles a rainbow. Then she hangs from each ear a kind of set of Chinese bells that weighs a half-pound. In addition, those who are the most *worldly* put through their nostrils a large ring of tin that hangs over their mouths and produces the most gracious effect. They also add a necklace composed of large discs on which various wild animals are carved. Their garment consists of a type of cloth tunic that falls a little below their knees. They are usually draped with a blanket that at night serves as their bed. You are still not at the end of the portrait. The style in the woods is to walk pigeon-toed. I do not know if it is more unnatural than to walk with the feet pointed outward; but our European eyes get used to this kind of beauty with difficulty. Do you imagine that to achieve this effect the Indian woman binds her feet from childhood, so that at twenty years of age, the two tips of her feet face each other while walking. Then she elicits all compliments and is reputed to be among the most *fashionable.* All that I know is that I would not want to take the place of Chactas near her for all the gold in the world. The Indian men are, moreover, better than their women. They are large, strapping young men, built like stags and with their agility. They have a charming expression when they smile and resemble devils incarnate when they are angry (letter to the vicomtesse Hippolyte de Tocqueville, Albany, 7 September 1831, YTC, BI12).

Beaumont was of the same opinion: "I do not know up to now where M. de Chateaubriand took the type for his Atala. I see a few Indian men who are fairly good in their person, but the women are frightful and repulsive." Letter to Ernest de Chabrol (2 August 1831), *Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 114.

inordinately large, the facial expression ignoble and nasty. Their physiognomy proclaimed their profound depravity that only a long abuse of the benefits of civilization can give. You would have said men belonging to the lowest population of our great European cities. And yet they were still savages. With the vices that they got from us, was mingled something of the barbaric and uncivilized that made them a hundred times still more repulsive. These Indians did not carry weapons. They were covered by European clothes, but they did not use them in the same way we did.[c] You saw that they were not used to them and still found themselves imprisoned in their folds. With the ornaments of Europe, they joined products of a barbaric luxury, feathers, enormous earrings and shell necklaces. The movements of these men were rapid and disorderly, their voices shrill and discordant, their looks restless and savage. At first sight, you would have been tempted to see in each one of them only a beast of the forest to which education had been quite able to give the appearance of a man, but that had nonetheless remained an animal. These weak and depraved creatures belonged, however, to one of the most famous tribes of the former American world. We had before us, and it is pitiful to say so, the last remnants of the celebrated Confederation of the Iroquois whose manly wisdom was no less known than their courage and who for a long time held the balance between the two greatest European nations.

You would be wrong, however, to want to judge the Indian race on the basis of this ill-formed example, this lost offshoot of a wild tree that had grown up in the mire of our cities. That would be to repeat the error that we committed ourselves and that we had the occasion to recognize later.

That evening we left the city and a little distance from the last houses we saw an Indian lying along the road. It was a young man. He was motionless and we thought he was dead. A few stifled groans that escaped painfully from his chest let us know that he was still alive and was fighting one of those dangerous bouts of drunkenness caused by brandy. The sun had

c. "Some were covered with blankets; some women [with] pants and hats; some men with women's clothing" (alphabetic notebook A, 20 July 1831, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 224).

already set; the ground was becoming more and more damp. Everything announced that this unfortunate young man would give up his last breath there, unless he were helped. It was the time when the Indians left Buffalo to go back to their village; from time to time a group of them happened to pass by near us. They approached, brutally turned over the body of their compatriot in order to see who he was and then began to walk again without deigning to respond to our comments. Most of these men were drunk themselves. Finally a young Indian woman came along who at first seemed to approach with a certain interest. I thought that it was the wife or the sister of the dying man. She looked at him attentively, called his name out loud, felt his heart and, being assured that he was alive, tried to draw him out of his lethargy. But since her efforts were futile, we saw her become furious with this inanimate body that lay before her. She struck his head, twisted his face with her hands, trampled on him. While abandoning herself to these acts of ferocity, she let out inarticulate and wild cries that, at this time, still seem to reverberate in my ears. Finally we believed that we had to intervene, and we ordered her peremptorily to withdraw. She obeyed, but we heard her let out a burst of barbaric laughter as she went away.

Back in the city, we told several people about the young Indian. We spoke about the imminent danger to which he was exposed; we even offered to pay his expenses at an inn. All of that was futile. We couldn't get anyone to get involved. Some said to us: These men are used to drinking to excess and to sleeping on the ground. They do not die of such accidents. Others asserted that probably the Indian would die; but you read this half-expressed thought on their lips: What is the life of an Indian? That, deep down, was the general sentiment. Amidst this society so well-ordered, so prudish, so full of morality and virtue, you find a complete insensitivity; a sort of cold and implacable egoism when it concerns the natives of America. The inhabitants of the United States do not hunt the Indians with hounds and horn as the Spanish of Mexico did. But it is the same ruthless sentiment that animates the European race here as well as everywhere else.

How many times in the course of our travels did we not meet honest city dwellers who said to us in the evening, calmly seated in a corner of

their home: Each day the number of Indians is decreasing. It isn't that we often wage war on them, but the brandy that we sell to them at a low cost removes more of them every year than we could do with our arms. This world belongs to us, they added; God, by denying its first inhabitants the ability to become more civilized, destined them in advance to an inevitable destruction. The true owners of the continent are those who know how to make the most of its riches.

Satisfied with his reasoning the American goes to church where he hears a minister of the Gospel repeat to him that men are brothers and that the eternal being, who made them all on the same model, gave to all of them the duty to help one another.

* * * * *

On July 19 at ten o'clock in the morning we boarded the steamboat *Ohio,* taking us toward Detroit. A very strong breeze blew from the northwest and gave the waters of Lake Erie all the appearance of the agitation of ocean waves. To the right spread a limitless horizon, to the left we kept close to the southern coasts of the lake which we often approached close enough to hear voices. These coasts were perfectly flat and differed from those of all the lakes that I had had the occasion to visit in Europe. Nor did they resemble the shores of the sea. Immense forests shaded them and formed a sort of thick and rarely broken belt around the lake.[d] From time to time, however, the country suddenly changes appearance. Coming around a woods, you notice the elegant spire of a church steeple, houses sparkling with whiteness and cleanliness, shops. Two steps further, the primitive and seemingly impenetrable forest regains its sway and again its foliage is reflected in the waters of the lake.

Those who have traveled throughout the United States will find in this picture a striking emblem of American society. Everything there is abrupt

d. "I believe that in one of my letters, I complained that you found hardly any more forest in America; I must make amends here. Not only do you find forest and woods in America; but the entire country is still only a vast forest, in the middle of which some clearings have been made." Letter of Tocqueville to his mother (Auburn, 17 July 1831), YTC, BIa1, and *OCB,* VII, pp. 36–37.

and unexpected; everywhere extreme civilization and nature abandoned to itself are found together and, in a way, face to face. It is not what you imagine in France. As for me, in my traveler's illusions—and what class of men does not have its own—I imagined something entirely different. I had noticed that in Europe, the more or less isolated state in which a province or a city was found, its wealth or its poverty, its small or large size exercised an immense influence on the ideas, the mores, the whole civilization of its inhabitants and often put the difference of several centuries between the various parts of the same territory.

I thought it was so with more reason in the New World, and that a country, populated in an incomplete and partial manner as America, had to present all the conditions of existence and offer the image of society across all the ages. So America, according to me, was the only country in which you could follow step by step all the transformations that the social state imposed on man and in which it was possible to see those transformations like a vast chain that descended link by link from the opulent patrician of the cities to the savage of the wilderness. There, in a word, I expected to find the entire history of humanity enclosed within a few degrees of longitude.

Nothing is true in this picture. Of all the countries in the world, America is the least appropriate for providing the spectacle that I was coming to find there. In America, still more than in Europe, there is only a single society.[e] It can be rich or poor, humble or brilliant, commercial or agricultural, but everywhere it is composed of the same elements. The leveling effect of an equal civilization has passed over it. The man that you have left in the streets of New York, you will find again in the middle of the nearly impenetrable wilderness; the same clothing, same spirit, same language, same habits, same pleasures. Nothing rustic, nothing naive, nothing that feels like the wilderness, nothing that even resembles our villages. The reason for this singular state of things is easy to understand. The portions of the territories populated earliest and most completely have achieved a high level of civilization, instruction has been lavished there profusely, the spirit of equality [{the republican spirit}] has given a singularly uniform color to the internal habits of life. Now, note it well, these are precisely the same men who go

e. See p. 491 of the second volume.

each year to populate the wilderness. In Europe, each man lives and dies on the soil where he was born. In America, nowhere do you find representatives of a race that has multiplied in the wilderness after living there for a long time, unknown to the world and left to its own efforts. Those who inhabit these isolated places arrived there yesterday. They came with the mores, the ideas, the needs of civilization. They yield to savage life only what the imperious nature of things requires of them. From that the most bizarre contrasts result. You pass without transition from the wilderness to the street of a city, from the most wild scenes to the most pleasant pictures of civilized life. If night surprises you, do not force yourself to take shelter at the foot of a tree; you have a great chance of arriving in a village where you will find everything, even including French fashions and caricatures of boulevards. The merchant of Buffalo and of Detroit is as well supplied as that of New York; the mills of Lyons work for the one as for the other. You leave the main roads, you plunge along paths hardly cleared. You finally see a cleared field, a cabin made of logs half-hewn where daylight enters only by a narrow window; you finally believe you have reached the dwelling of the American peasant. Error. You penetrate the cabin that seems to be the home of all miseries, but the owner of this place wears the same clothes as you; he speaks the language of the cities. On the crude table are books and newspapers; the owner himself hastens to take you inside in order to know exactly what is happening in old Europe and to ask you for an accounting about what has struck you the most in his country. He will draw on paper a military campaign plan for the Belgians, and will teach you gravely what remains to be done for the prosperity of France. [≠He hastens to draw you away from the dramas of his country in order to talk to you about old Europe. He will say to you that the Poles have won [lost? (ed.)] at Ostrolenka and will inform you that a majority of one hundred votes has just destroyed the heredity peerage in the hereditary monarchy of France.≠] You would think you are seeing a rich landowner who has come to live temporarily for a few nights at a hunting camp. And in fact, the log cabin is for the American only a momentary shelter, a temporary concession made to the necessity of circumstances. When the fields that surround it are entirely in production and when the new owner has the leisure to occupy himself with

the pleasant things of life, a house more spacious and more appropriate to his needs will replace the *log house* and will serve as a shelter for the numerous children who one day will also go off to create a dwelling in the wilderness.

But, to come back to our journey, we navigated with difficulty all day long in sight of the coasts of Pennsylvania and later those of Ohio. We stopped for a moment at Presqu'Ile, today Erie. That is where the canal from Pittsburgh will end. By means of this work, whose complete execution is, they say, easy and now certain, the Mississippi will communicate with the River of the North and the riches of Europe will circulate freely across the five hundred leagues of land that separate the Gulf of Mexico from the Atlantic Ocean.

In the evening, the weather having become favorable, we headed rapidly toward Detroit by crossing the middle of the lake. The following morning, we were in sight of the small island called *Middle Sister* near where, in 1814, Commodore Perry won a famous naval victory over the English.

A little later, the even coasts of Canada seemed to approach rapidly and we saw the Detroit River opening before us and, appearing in the distance, the walls of Fort Malden. This place, founded by the French, still bears numerous traces of its origin. The houses have the form and the placement of those of our peasants. In the center of the hamlet arises the Catholic church tower surmounted by a cock. You would say a village around Caen or Evreux. While we considered, not without emotion, this image of France, our attention was diverted by the sight of a singular spectacle. To our right, on the river bank, a Scottish soldier mounted guard in full uniform. He wore the uniform that the fields of Waterloo have made so famous. The feathered cap, the jacket, nothing was missing; the sun made his uniform and his weapons glisten. To our left, and as if to provide a parallel for us, two entirely naked Indians, their bodies gaudy with colors, their noses pierced by rings, arrived at the same moment on the opposite bank. They climbed into a small bark canoe in which a blanket formed the sail. Abandoning this fragile, small boat to the work of the wind and current, they darted like an arrow toward our vessel, which they went around in an instant. Then they went calmly to fish near the English soldier who,

still glistening and immobile, seemed placed there like the representative of the brilliant and armed civilization of Europe.

We arrived at Detroit at three o'clock. Detroit is a small city of two or three thousand souls that the Jesuits founded in the middle of the woods in 1710 and that still contains a large number of French families.

We had crossed the entire State of New York and done one hundred leagues on Lake Erie; this time we touched upon the limits of civilization, but we did not know at all where we needed to head. To find out was not something as easy as you may believe. To travel through nearly impenetrable forests, to cross deep rivers, to face pestilential swamps, to sleep exposed to the dampness of the woods, these are the efforts that the American imagines without difficulty if it is a matter of earning a dollar; for that is the point. But that someone would do similar things out of curiosity, this does not occur to his mind. Add that living in the wilderness, he prizes only the work of man. He will gladly send you to visit a road, a bridge, a beautiful village. But that you attach a value to great trees and to a beautiful solitude, that is absolutely beyond him.[f]

So nothing is more difficult than to find someone able to understand you. You want to see the forest, our hosts said smilingly to us; go straight ahead of you, you will find what you want. In the vicinity there are as a matter of fact new roads and well-cleared paths. As for the Indians, you will see too many of them in our public squares and in our streets; there is no need to go farther for that. Those Indians at least are beginning to become civilized and have a less savage appearance. We didn't take long to realize that it was impossible to obtain the truth from them by frontal assault and that we had to *maneuver.*

So we went to the official charged by the United States with the sale of the still unoccupied lands covering the district of Michigan; we presented ourselves to him as men who, without having a well-fixed intention of settling in the country, could nonetheless have a long-term interest in knowing the price of the lands and their situation. Major Biddle,[g] which was the

f. See chapter 17 of the first part of volume III, especially pp. 835–37.

g. John Biddle (1792–1859). Graduate of Princeton University, Captain during the

name of the official, understood marvelously this time what we wanted to do and immediately launched into a host of details that we listened to eagerly. This part, he says to us, showing us on the map the St. Joseph river, which after long twistings and turnings, discharges into Lake Michigan, seems to be the most suitable for meeting your plans; the land is good there; some beautiful villages have already been established, and the road that leads there is so well maintained that every day public coaches travel it. Good! we said to ourselves; we now know where we should not go unless we want to visit the wilderness by postal coach. We thanked Mr. Biddle for his advice and asked him, with an air of indifference and a kind of scorn, what was the portion of the district where until now the current of emigration made itself least felt. "Over here," he says to us, without giving more value to his words than we to our question, "toward the northwest. Toward Pontiac and in the area surrounding this village some quite beautiful settlements have been recently founded. But you must not think about settling farther away; the country is covered by an almost impenetrable forest that extends endlessly toward the northwest, where you find only wild beasts and Indians. The United States plans to open a road there shortly; but as yet it has only been started and stops at Pontiac. I repeat to you, it is a part that you must not think about." We again thanked Mr. Biddle for his good counsel and we left determined to do exactly the opposite.[h] We were beside

War of 1812, charged with the sale of lands at Detroit and later delegate of the territory to Congress, from 1829 to 1831, president of the constitutional convention in 1835. See *Early History of Michigan with Biographies* . . . (Lansing: Thorp & Godfrey, 1888); and *Michigan Biographies* (Lansing: The Michigan Historical Commission, 1924), 2 vols.

h. I went to see in Detroit the public officer charged with the sale of lands, or of the *land-office,* and he gave me the following details.

Since the ice melted, that is from the month of last May, the time when the Lake became navigable, until the first of July, about 5,000 new settlers (this is the English word, we do not have the exact equivalent) arrived in Michigan. The size of this figure surprised me, as you can believe, all the more so since I believed, just like the general opinion among us, that all the *new settlers* were Europeans.

The land agent informed me that out of these 5,000 persons, there were not 200 emigrants from Europe. And the proportion is larger than usual. "But," I said to the agent, "what can bring this great number of Americans to leave the place of their

ourselves with joy at finally knowing a place that had not yet been reached by the torrent of European civilization.

The next day, July 23,[j] we hastened to rent two horses. Since we expected to keep them for ten days, we wanted to put a certain price in the hands of the owner; but he refused to accept it, saying that we would pay when we returned. He was not worried. Michigan is surrounded on all sides by lakes and wilderness; he let us loose in a kind of riding school, whose door he held. So after purchasing a compass as well as provisions, we got underway, rifle over the shoulder, with as much lack of concern about the future and as lightheartedly as two schoolboys who would be leaving school to go to spend their vacation at their father's house.

If in fact we had only wanted to see the forest, our hosts of Detroit would have been right to tell us that it was not necessary to go very far, for one mile from the city the road entered into the forest never to emerge again.

birth to come to inhabit a wilderness?" "Nothing is easier to understand," he answered me. "Since the law divides the wealth of the father equally among the children, the result is that each generation finds itself poorer than the preceding one. But as soon as the small landowner of our populated states notices that he is beginning to have difficulty making a living, he sells his field, comes with all his family to the frontier line, buys a very large farm with the small capital that he has just created, and makes a fortune in a few years.

"At his death, if this fortune is not enough for his children, they will go like him to create a new one in a new wilderness. We have, thank God, enough room to expand to the Pacific Ocean."

Do you not find, my dear friend, that an entire thick book is contained in this single response? How can we imagine a revolution in a country where such a career is open to the needs and to the passions of man, and how can we compare the political institutions of such a people to those of any other? (letter to Ernest de Chabrol, Buffalo, 17 August 1831, YTC, BIa2).

j. André Jardin and George W. Pierson noted in their edition of the letters of Beaumont (*Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 102, note) that there exist, from mid-July to August 1, 1831, differences in dates between the correspondence of Tocqueville and that of Beaumont. The two historians rely more on the dates of Tocqueville, who kept a travel notebook. Nonetheless, if you compare Tocqueville's dates to those of Beaumont's sketches (YTC, BIIb), the dates coincide for three sketches:

—watercolor of a blue bird ("Painted at Pontiac 29 July 1831"),
—sketch number 14 ("25 July 1831. Forest of Saginaw (Indian guide)"),
—sketch number 15 ("Loghouse. Saginaw. 26 July 1831").

The terrain on which the road is found is perfectly flat and often swampy. From time to time new clearings are found on the way. Since these settlements perfectly resemble each other, whether they are found deep in Michigan or at the door of New York, I am going to try to describe them here once and for all.[k]

The small bells that the pioneer carefully hangs around the necks of his animals in order to find them in the thick woods announce from afar the approach to a clearing. Soon you hear the sound of the ax that fells the trees of the forest and, as you approach, signs of destruction announce still more clearly the presence of man. Cut branches cover the road, trunks half-charred by fire or mutilated by iron, still stand upright along your passage. You continue your march and you come to a woods in which all the trees seem to have been stricken by sudden death. In the middle of summer their dry branches present nothing more than the image of winter. Examining them more closely, you notice that in their bark a deep circle has been traced that, stopping the circulation of sap, did not take long to make them die. This in fact is how the planter usually begins. Not able the first year to cut all the trees that cover his new property, he sows corn under their branches and, by killing them, he prevents them from shading his crop. After this field, an incomplete beginning, a first step of civilization in the wilderness, you suddenly see the cabin of the landowner. It is generally placed in the center of a ground more carefully cultivated than the rest, but where man still sustains an unequal battle against nature. There the trees have been cut, but not uprooted; their trunks still cover and clutter the ground that they formerly shaded. Around these dried-up remains, wheat, oak shoots, plants of all types, weeds of all kinds grow jumbled together and increase together on an intractable and still half-wild ground. At the center of this vigorous and varied vegetation arises the house of the planter, or as it is called in this country, the *log house.* Like the field around it, this rustic dwelling announces a new and

k. See p. 1287.

hurried work. Its length rarely exceeds 30 feet. It is 20 feet wide, 15 feet high. Its walls as well as the roof are formed from tree trunks not squared off, between which moss and earth have been placed to prevent the cold and the rain from penetrating the interior of the house. As the traveler approaches, the scene becomes more animated. Warned by the sound of his footsteps, the children who were rolling around in the surrounding debris, get up precipitously and flee toward the parental refuge, as though frightened at the sight of a man, while two large half-wild dogs, ears upright and muzzles elongated, emerge from the cabin and come growling to cover the retreat of their young masters.

Then the pioneer himself appears at the door of his dwelling; he casts a searching glance at the new arrival, signals to his dogs to come back into the house and hastens to serve as their example himself without exhibiting either curiosity or concern.

At the entry of the *log house,* the European cannot prevent himself from casting an astonished eye over the spectacle that it presents.

There is generally in this cabin only a single window at which a muslin curtain sometimes hangs; for in these places, where it is not rare to see necessities missing, superfluities are frequently found. On the hearth of beaten earth crackles a resinous fire that, better than the day, lights up the interior of the building. Above this rustic hearth, you see trophies of war or hunting; a long rifle with a grooved barrel, a deerskin, eagle feathers. To the right of the chimney a map of the United States is often spread, which the wind, coming through the chinks in the wall, flaps and agitates constantly. Near it, on a single shelf of rough hewn planks are placed a few random volumes: a Bible whose cover and edges are already worn by the piety of two generations, a book of prayers, and sometimes a canto of Milton or a Shakespeare tragedy [{a history of America, a few pious stories and some newspapers}]. Along the walls are placed a few crude seats, fruit of the owner's industry, trunks instead of armoires, agricultural implements and some samples of the harvest. At the center of the room is a wobbly table whose legs, still covered with foliage, seem to have grown by themselves out of the earth on the spot occupied by the table. That is where the entire family gathers each day to take its meals. There you also see a teapot

of English porcelain, spoons usually of wood, a few chipped cups and some newspapers.

The appearance of the master of this dwelling is no less remarkable than the place that serves as his shelter.

Angular muscles, slender limbs make the inhabitant of New England recognizable at first glance. This man was not born in the wilderness where he lives. His constitution alone declares it. His first years were spent within an intellectual and reasoning society. It is his will that has thrown him into the wilderness undertakings for which he seems so little fit. But if his physical strength seems not up to his enterprise, on his features furrowed by the cares of life, there reigns an air of practical intelligence, of cold and persevering energy that is striking at first sight. His gait is slow and formal, his words measured and his appearance austere. Habit and, even more, pride have given his face this stoic rigidity that his actions belie. The pioneer scorns, it is true, what often agitates the heart of men most violently; his goods and his life will never follow the chance of a throw of the dice or the fortunes of a woman; but, to gain comfort, he has faced exile, solitude and the innumerable miseries of uncivilized life; he has slept on the bare ground; he has been exposed to forest fever and to the Indian's tomahawk. He made this effort one day, he has duplicated it for years; he will do it perhaps for another twenty years, without discouragement and without complaint. [{In the pursuit of what he regards as the goal of his entire life, every competitor, every adversary will become an enemy to whom an implacable hatred will be attached as durable as the sentiment that gave birth to it. Is that a man without passions [v: cold and unfeeling]?}] Is a man who is capable of such sacrifices a cold and unfeeling being? Shouldn't we, on the contrary, recognize in him one of those mental passions that are so ardent, so tenacious, so implacable? Concentrated on this sole goal of making a fortune, the emigrant has finished by creating an entirely individual existence; the sentiments of family have themselves merged into a vast egoism, and it is doubtful that in his wife and his children he sees anything other than a detached portion of himself. Deprived of habitual relationships with his fellows, he has learned to make solitude a pleasure. When you present yourself at the threshold of his isolated dwelling, the pioneer advances to meet you; he offers his hand as is the custom, but his physi-

ognomy expresses neither welcome nor joy. He speaks only to interrogate you; it is a need of the head and not of the heart that he is satisfying, and scarcely has he drawn from you the news that he desired to learn than he falls back into silence. You would think you were seeing a man who withdrew in the evening into his house fatigued by troublesome individuals and the chatter of the world. Interrogate him in turn; he will intelligently give you the information you lack; he will even provide for your needs; he will look to your safety as long as you are under his roof. But so much restraint and pride reign in all his conduct, you see in it such a profound indifference about even the result of his efforts, that you feel your gratitude cool. The pioneer is hospitable in his way, but his hospitality in no way touches you because he seems, while exercising it, to be submitting to a painful necessity of the wilderness. He sees in hospitality a duty that his position imposes on him, not a pleasure. This unknown man is the representative of a restless, reasoning and adventurous race that does coldly what only the ardor of the passions explains, who traffics in everything without exception, even morality and religion.

A nation of conquerors who submit to leading savage life without ever letting themselves be carried away by its sweet pleasures, who love civilization and enlightenment only when they are useful for well-being, and who shut themselves up in the wilderness of America with an ax and some newspapers; a people who, like all great peoples, has only one thought, and who advances toward the acquisition of wealth, the only goal of its efforts, with a perseverance and a scorn for life that you could call heroic, if the word was suitable for something other than the efforts of virtue. This wandering people, not stopped by rivers and lakes, before whom forests fall and prairies are covered with shade, will, after touching the Pacific Ocean, retrace its steps and destroy the societies that it will have formed behind it.

While speaking about the pioneer, you cannot forget the companion of his miseries and of his dangers. See at the other end of the room, this young woman who, while overseeing preparations for the meal, rocks her youngest son on her knees. Like the emigrant, this woman is in the prime of life, like him she can recall the comfort of her earliest years. Her dress still announces even now a barely extinguished taste for finery. But time has weighed

heavily on her. On her features faded before their time, on her weakened limbs, it is easy to see that existence has been a heavy burden for her. In fact this frail creature has already been exposed to incredible miseries. Hardly entered into life, she had to tear herself away from the tenderness of her mother and these sweet fraternal bonds that the young woman never abandons without shedding tears, even when she leaves them to go to share the opulent house of a new husband. The wife of the pioneer, removed in a moment and without hope of return from this innocent cradle of youth, has exchanged the charms of society and the joys of the domestic home for the solitude of the forests. Her nuptial bed was placed on the bare earth of the wilderness. To devote herself to her austere duties, to submit to privations that were unknown to her, to embrace an existence for which she was not made, such was the use of the best years of her life, such have been for her the sweet pleasures of the conjugal union. Deprivation, sufferings and boredom have altered her fragile structure, but not weakened her courage. Amid the profound sadness painted on her delicate features, you easily notice a religious resignation, a profound peace, and I do not know what natural and tranquil steadfastness that meets all the miseries of life without fearing or defying them.

Around this woman crowd half-dressed children, shining with health, unconcerned about tomorrow, true sons of the wilderness. Their mother from time to time gives them a look full of melancholy and joy; to see their strength and her weakness, you would say that she has exhausted herself by giving life to them, and that she does not regret what they have cost her.

The house inhabited by the emigrants has no interior walls or attic. Into the single room that it contains, the entire family comes at night to find shelter. This dwelling by itself alone forms like a small world. It is the ark of civilization lost amid an ocean of leaves, a sort of oasis in the desert. One hundred steps further the endless forest spreads its shadow and the wilderness begins again.

* * * * *

We arrived at Pontiac only after the sun went down and it was evening. Twenty very clean and exceedingly pretty buildings, forming as many well

supplied stores, a limpid stream, a clearing of a quarter league square, and the endless forest around it: there is the faithful picture of the village of Pontiac that in twenty years will perhaps be a city. The sight of this place reminded me of what Mr. Gallatin had said to me a month before in New York;[m] there are no villages in America, at least in the sense that we give to the word. Here the houses of the farmers are all spread out among the fields. People do not gather in one place except to establish a kind of market for the use of the surrounding population. You see in these so-called villages only men of law, printers or merchants.

We were directed to the most beautiful inn in Pontiac[n] (for there are two) and we were brought as is customary into what is called the *bar room.* It is a room where you are given drinks and where the simplest worker as well as the richest merchant of the place come to smoke, to drink, and to talk politics together on the most perfect outwardly equal footing. The master of the place or the landlord was, I will not say a large peasant, there are no peasants in America, but at least a very large man who wore on his face that expression of candor and simplicity that distinguishes Norman horse traders. He was a man who, for fear of intimidating you, never looked you in the face while speaking, but waited to look at you when he felt comfortable, while you were occupied conversing elsewhere. Moreover, a profound politician and, following American habits, an unrelenting questioner. This respected citizen, as well as the rest of the assembly, considered us at first with astonishment. Our travel clothes and our guns hardly announced business entrepreneurs, and to travel simply to see was something absolutely unaccustomed. In order to cut explanations short, we declared

m. Conversation of 10 June 1831, non-alphabetic notebook 1, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 60–61.

n. In the autumn of 1867, Charles Sumner began a series of lectures in Pontiac with the title "The Nation." He evoked the Tocqueville visit that the daughter of Judge Amasa Bagley, host of the travelers, still recalled. "He came during a severe storm, remaining several days. There was a great mystery surrounding him and his servant (the most important of the two in appearance). They got their meals alone and claimed a good share of my father's attention, seeking from him information of the then new territory of Michigan." Nancy G. Davis, "History of Amasa Bagley," in *Pioneer Collections* (Lansing, Mich.: W. S. George & Co., 1881), III, p. 600. Also see George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 251–52.

right at the beginning that we came to buy land. Hardly were the words said, than we noticed that by trying to avoid one evil we had thrown ourselves into another very much more formidable one.

They ceased treating us, it is true, like extraordinary beings, but each one wanted to do business with us; to get rid of them and their farms, we said to our host that before concluding anything, we would like to obtain from him useful information about the price of land and about how to cultivate it. He immediately brought us into another room, with a fitting slowness spread a map of Michigan on the oak table that was in the middle of the room and, placing the candle between the three of us, waited in an impassive silence for what we had to say to him. The reader, without having like us the intention of settling in one of the uninhabited places of America, may nonetheless be curious to know how so many thousands of Europeans and Americans who come each year to find shelter there set about to do so. So I am going to transcribe here the information provided by our host from Pontiac. Often since, we have indeed been able to verify the perfect exactness of his information.[o]

"Here it is not like in France," our host said to us after having calmly heard all our questions and snuffed out the candle; "in your country labor is cheap and land is expensive; here buying land costs nothing and the labor of men is beyond price. I am saying this in order to show you that, to settle in America as in Europe, capital is necessary, although it is used differently.

o. Tocqueville and Beaumont gathered abundant information about the expenses to provide for in order to become established as a settler in America. "I am persuaded that in France there are thousands of people who would be interested in coming to America to buy good land there at a good price, but most are unaware of the situation. Perhaps to make the situation known would be a good service to our country. Ordinarily the difficulty for those who emigrate to a new country is in the difference of language; but this obstacle would not exist in Michigan where a quarter of the population speaks French." Gustave de Beaumont, *Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 116. During their return from Saginaw, Tocqueville and Beaumont remained a day at Pontiac with the idea of obtaining new details on how to settle in the wilderness, on crops, etc. A part of the observations that Tocqueville puts in the mouth of Amasa Bagley had been made to him by Dr. Burns, a Scottish doctor who lived near Pontiac, and with whom they had spoken on July 30. See alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 233–34.

For my part, I would not advise anyone, no matter who it may be, to come to seek a fortune in our wilderness unless having at his disposition a sum of 150 to 200 dollars (800 to 1,000 francs). An acre in Michigan[1] never costs more than 10 shillings (about 6 Fr., 50 c.) when the land is still uncultivated. So a worker can earn in one day what it takes to buy an acre. But the purchase made, the difficulty begins. Here is how you generally set about to overcome it. The pioneer goes to the place that he has just bought with a few animals, salted pork, two barrels of wheat and some tea. If he finds a cabin near, he goes there and receives temporary hospitality. In the opposite case he puts up a tent in the very middle of the woods that is to become his field. His first care is to cut down the nearest trees, with which he hastily builds the crude house whose structure you have already been able to examine. Among us, the maintenance of animals scarcely costs anything. The emigrant releases them into the forest after attaching a small iron bell to them. It is very rare for these animals, left to themselves in this way, to leave the area around their home. The greatest expense is that of clearing the land. If the pioneer arrives in the wilderness with a family able to aid him in his first efforts, his task is easy enough. But it is rarely so. In general the emigrant is young and, if he already has children, they are young. Then he must provide alone for all the first needs of his family or hire the services of his neighbors. It costs him from 4 to 5 dollars (from 20 to 25 francs) to have an acre cleared. Once the land is prepared, the new owner puts one acre in potatoes, the rest in wheat and corn. Corn is the providence of these wilderness areas; it grows in the water of our swamps and sprouts beneath the foliage of the forest better than under the rays of the sun.[p] It is corn that saves the family of the emigrant from an inevitable destruction, when poverty, illness or negligence have prevented him from sufficiently clearing the land during the first year. There is nothing more difficult to get through

1. *An acre is 330 English feet long by 132 feet wide.*
p. In the margin: "≠Misery.
"Isolation.
"Illness.
"No Europeans.
"Only the Americans can bear such miseries.≠"

than the first years that follow the clearing of the land. Later comes comfort, and then wealth."

This is how our host spoke; as for us, we listened to these simple details with almost as much interest as if we had wanted to profit from them ourselves; and when he became silent, we said to him:

"The land of all these uninhabited forests is generally swampy and unhealthy; doesn't the emigrant who exposes himself to the miseries of the wilderness at least fear for his life?" "All clearing of the land is a perilous undertaking," replied the American, "and it is almost without example that the pioneer or his family escapes forest fever during the first year. Often when you travel in the autumn, you find all the inhabitants of the cabin suffering from the fever, from the emigrant to his youngest son." "And what becomes of these unfortunates when Providence strikes them like that?" "They resign themselves while waiting for a better future." "But do they hope for some help from their fellows?" "Almost none." "Can they at least obtain help from medicine?" "The closest doctor often lives 60 miles from their house. They do as the Indians; they die or are cured depending on God's pleasure." We began again: "Does the voice of religion sometimes come to them?" "Very rarely; we have not yet been able to *provide for* anything in our woods to assure the public observation of a religion. Nearly every summer, it is true, a few Methodist preachers come to travel through the new settlements. Word of their arrival spreads with an incredible rapidity from cabin to cabin; it is the great news of the day. At the time appointed, the emigrant, his wife and his children, head along the paths scarcely cleared through the forest toward the indicated meeting place. People come there from 50 miles around. The faithful do not gather in a church but in the open, under the leaves of the forest. A pulpit made from rough-hewn trunks, large trees turned over to serve as pews, these are the adornments of this rustic church. The pioneers and their families camp in the woods that surround it; there for three days and three nights the crowd practices religious exercises rarely interrupted. You have to see how ardently these men give themselves to prayer, with what reverence they listen to the solemn voice of the preacher. It is in the wilderness that they show themselves famished for religion." "A final question. It is generally believed among us that the

wilderness of America is populated with the help of European emigration. So how is it that since we have been traveling through your forests, we haven't happened to meet a single European?" A smile of superiority and satisfied pride was written on the features of our host upon hearing this question:

> It is only Americans, he answered emphatically, who can have the courage to submit to such miseries and who know how to buy comfort at such a price. The European emigrant stops in the large cities that are on the coast or in the districts surrounding them. There, he becomes artisan, farm laborer, valet. He leads a more pleasant life than in Europe and appears satisfied to leave the same inheritance to his children. The American on the contrary takes possession of the land and, with it, he seeks to create a great future for himself.

After uttering these final words, our host stopped. He let an immense column of smoke escape from his mouth and seemed ready to listen to what we had to say to inform him about our plans.

We thanked him first for his valuable advice and for his wise counsel from which we assured him we would profit some day, and we added: "Before settling in your district, my dear host, we have the intention of going to Saginaw and we want to consult you on this point." At the word Saginaw a singular transformation took place in the physiognomy of the American; it seemed that we had dragged him violently out of real life to push him into the domains of the imagination; his eyes dilated, his mouth gaped and a look of the most profound astonishment was written on all his features: "You want to go to Saginaw," he cried, "to Saginaw Bay! Two reasonable men, two cultivated foreigners want to go to Saginaw Bay? It is scarcely believable." "And so why not?" we replied. "But do you know clearly," our host began again, "what you are proposing? Do you know that Saginaw is the last inhabited point until the Pacific Ocean? That from here to Saginaw you find nothing more than a wilderness and uncleared empty spaces? Have you considered that the woods are full of Indians and of mosquitoes? That you will have to bed down at least one night in the dampness of the forest shade? Have you thought about the fever? Will you know how to get out of difficulty in the wilderness and not get lost in the

labyrinth of our forests?" After this tirade he paused in order to judge better the impression he had made. We resumed: "All that is perhaps true. But we will leave tomorrow morning for Saginaw Bay." Our host reflected a moment, nodded his head, and said in a slow and positive way: "Only a great interest could lead two foreigners to such an undertaking: you have almost certainly figured, very wrongly, that it was advantageous to settle in the places most remote from all competition?" We did not respond. He resumed: "Perhaps you have been charged as well by the fur trading company of Canada with establishing a relationship with the Indian tribes of the frontier?" Same silence. Our host had run out of conjectures and he was quiet, but he continued to reflect deeply about the strangeness of our plan.

"Have you never been to Saginaw?" we said. "Me," he answered, "I have been there five or six times, to my sorrow, but I had a reason to do so and no reason can be found for you." "But don't lose sight, my worthy host, of the fact that we are not asking you if we must go to Saginaw, but only what is needed to manage to do so easily." Thus led back to the question, our American regained all his composure and all the clarity of his ideas; he explained to us in a few words and with an admirable practical good sense the way in which we had to proceed in order to cross the wilderness, entered into the smallest details, and foresaw the most unlikely circumstances. At the end of his instructions he paused again in order to see if we would not finally reveal the secret of our journey, and noticing that on both sides we had nothing more to say, he took the candle, led us to a room and, very democratically shaking our hands, went away to finish the evening in the common room.

We got up with the day and prepared to leave. Our host was soon afoot himself. Night had not revealed to him what made us stick to behavior that was so extraordinary in his eyes. Since we appeared absolutely decided to act contrary to his counsel, however, he dared not return to the charge, but constantly circled around us. From time to time he repeated half-aloud: *"I can imagine with difficulty* what can lead two foreigners to go to Saginaw." He repeated this sentence several times, until finally I said to him putting my foot in the stirrup: "There are many reasons that lead us to do so, my dear host." He stopped short upon hearing these words, and looking me

in the face for the first time, he seemed to prepare himself to hear the revelation of a great mystery. But, calmly mounting my horse, I gave him a sign of friendship as a concluding gesture and moved away at a fast trot. When I was fifty steps away, I turned my head; I saw him still planted like a haystack before his door. A little later he went back inside shaking his head. I imagine that he still said: "I have difficulty understanding what two foreigners are going to do in Saginaw."

* * * * *

We had been advised to address ourselves to a Mr. Williams[q] who, having traded for a long time with the Chippewa Indians and having a son settled at Saginaw, could provide us with useful information. After going several miles in the woods and afraid that we had already missed the house of our man, we encountered an old man busy working in a small garden. We approached him. It was Mr. Williams himself. He received us with great kindness and gave us a letter for his son. We asked him if we had anything to fear from the Indian bands whose territory we were going to cross. Mr. Williams rejected this idea with a kind of indignation: "No! No!," he said, "you can go without fear. For my part, I would sleep more tranquilly among Indians than among whites." I note this as the first favorable impression that I had received about the Indians since my arrival in America. In very inhabited regions they are only spoken about with a mixture of fear and scorn, and I believe that there in fact they deserve these two feelings. You could see above what I thought about them myself when I met the first of them at Buffalo. As you advance in this journal and as you follow me amid the European population of the frontier and amid the Indian tribes themselves, you will conceive a more honorable and, at the very same time, more accurate idea of the first inhabitants of America.

After leaving Mr. Williams we continued our route through the woods.

q. George W. Pierson (*Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* p. 252) identifies him: Major Oliver Williams. The *Reports of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan* (Lansing: Thorp & Godfrey, 1877–1891) include numerous references that validate this identification.

From time to time a small lake (this district is full of them) appeared like a sheet of silver beneath the forest foliage. It is difficult to imagine the charm that surrounds these lovely places where man has not settled and where a profound peace and an uninterrupted silence still reign. I have traveled in the Alps through dreadful, isolated areas where nature rejects the labor of man, but displays even in its very horrors a grandeur that transports and grips the soul. Here the solitude is not less profound, but it does not produce the same impressions. The only sentiments that you feel while traveling through these flowered wilderness areas where, as in Milton's *Paradise,* everything is prepared to receive man, are a tranquil admiration, a mild melancholy, a vague disgust with civilized life; a sort of wild instinct that makes you think with pain that soon this delicious solitude will have changed face. Already in fact the white race advances across the surrounding woods and, in a few years, the European will have cut the trees that are reflected in the clear waters of the lake and forced the animals that populate its shores to withdraw toward new wilderness areas.

Always on the move, we came to a country with a new appearance. The land there was not level, but cut by hills and valleys. Several of these hills presented the most wild appearance. It was in one of these picturesque passages that, turning ourselves around suddenly to contemplate the imposing spectacle that we were leaving behind us, we noticed to our great surprise near the hindquarters of our horses an Indian who seemed to follow us step by step. He was a man about thirty years old, large and admirably proportioned as nearly all of them are. His black and shining hair fell to his shoulders except for two braids that were tied up at the top of his head. His face was daubed with black and red. He was covered with a type of very short blue blouse. He wore red *mittas;* these are a type of pants that go only to the top of the thigh, and his feet were covered with moccasins. At his side hung a knife. In his right hand he held a long carbine and in his left two birds that he had just killed. The first sight of this Indian made a not very pleasant impression on us. The place was poorly chosen for resisting an attack. To our right a pine forest rose to an immense height, to our left extended a deep ravine at the bottom of which among

the rocks flowed a small stream hidden from our sight by the obscurity of the foliage and toward which we descended blindly! Putting our hands on our rifles, turning and putting ourselves in the path opposite the Indian took only a moment. He stopped as well. We remained in silence for a half-minute. His face presented all the characteristic features that distinguish the Indian race from all others. In his perfectly black eyes gleamed the savage fire that still animates the look of the half-breed and is lost only with the second or third generation of white blood. His nose was hooked in the middle, slightly flat at the end, his cheekbones very prominent, and his strikingly wide mouth showed two rows of glistening white teeth that proved well enough that the savage, cleaner than his neighbor the American, did not spend his day chewing tobacco leaves. I said that at the moment when we had turned ourselves around putting our hands on our weapons, the Indian stopped. He underwent the rapid examination that we made of his person with an absolute impassivity, a steady and unchanging look. Since he saw that we had on our side no hostile sentiment, he began to smile; probably he saw that we were alarmed. It was the first time that I was able to observe to what extent the expression of gaiety completely changes the physiognomy of these savage men. I have since had the occasion a hundred times to make the same remark. A serious Indian and a smiling Indian are two entirely different men. There reigns in the immobility of the first a savage majesty that imposes an involuntary sentiment of terror. If this same man begins to smile, his entire face takes on an expression of innocence and of kindness that gives him a real charm.

When we saw our man brighten, we addressed some words to him in English. He let us speak as much as we wanted, then gestured that he did not understand. We offered him a bit of brandy, which he accepted without hesitation and without thanks. Speaking always by signs, we asked him for the birds that he carried and he gave them to us in return for a small coin. Having thus made his acquaintance, we saluted him and left at a fast trot. At the end of a quarter hour of a rapid march, turning around again, I was surprised to see the Indian still behind the hindquarters of my horse. He ran with the agility of a wild animal, without saying a single word or appearing to lengthen his stride. We stopped; he stopped. We started again;

he started again. We raced at full speed. Our horses, raised in the wilderness, easily overcame all obstacles. The Indian doubled his pace; I saw him sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left of my horse, leaping over bushes and coming back down to earth noiselessly. You would have said one of those wolves of Northern Europe that follow riders with the hope that they will fall from their horses and can be more easily devoured. The sight of this constant figure that seemed to hover at our sides, sometimes becoming lost in the obscurity of the forest, sometimes reappearing clearly, ended up becoming disturbing to us. Not able to imagine what led this man to follow us at such a hurried pace—and perhaps he had been doing so for a very long time when we discovered him for the first time—the idea occurred to us that he was leading us into an ambush. We were occupied with these thoughts when we noticed in the woods before us the end of another carbine. Soon we were next to the man who carried it. We took him at first for an Indian; he was covered by a sort of frock coat, close-fitted around the small of his back, delineating a narrow and neat waist; his neck was naked and his feet covered by moccasins. When we came near him and he raised his head, we immediately recognized a European and we stopped.[r] He came up to us, shook our hands cordially and entered into conversation with us: "Do you live in the wilderness?" "Yes, here is my house"; amid the leaves he showed us a hut much more miserable than the usual *log houses.* "Alone?" "Alone." "And so what do you do here?" "I wander through these woods and, to the right and left, I kill the game that I meet along the way, but it is not going well now." "And this kind of life pleases you?" "More than any other." "But aren't you afraid of the Indians?" "Afraid of the Indians! I prefer to live amid them than in the society of whites. No! No! I am not afraid of the Indians. They are worth more than we are, at least as long as we have not brutalized them with our liquors, the poor creatures!" We then showed our new acquaintance the man who followed us so obstinately and who had then stopped a few steps away and remained as unmoving as a statue. "He is a Chippewa," he said, "or as the French call them

r. In the margin: "To delete, I think; has too much the appearance of being reminiscent of Cooper."

a *Sauteur.* I wager that he is returning from Canada where he received the annual presents from the English. His family must not be far from here." Having said this, the American gestured to the Indian to approach and began to speak to him in his language with an extreme facility. It was a remarkable thing to see the pleasure that these two men, so different by birth and mores, found in exchanging their ideas. The conversation turned evidently on the respective merit of their weapons. The white, after very attentively examining the rifle of the savage: "That is a beautiful carbine," he said, "the English almost certainly gave it to him to use against us and he won't fail to do so at the first war. That is how the Indians draw upon their heads all the misfortunes that burden them. But they won't know it for long, the poor fellows." "Do the Indians use these long and heavy rifles with skill?" "There are no marksmen like the Indians," our new friend resumed energetically with a tone of the greatest admiration. "Examine the small birds he sold to you, Sir, they are pierced by a single bullet, and I am very sure that he fired only two shots to take them. Oh!" he added, "there is nothing happier than an Indian in the regions where we have not yet made the game flee. But the large animals sense us at more than three hundred miles, and by withdrawing they create before us like a desert where the poor Indians can no longer live if they do not cultivate the earth."

As we retook our path: "When you pass by again," our new friend cried to us, "knock on my door. It is a pleasure to meet white faces in these places."

I have related this conversation, which in itself contains nothing remarkable, in order to show a kind of man that we met very frequently at the limits of inhabited lands. They are Europeans who, despite the habits of their youth, have ended up finding in the liberty of the wilderness an inexpressible charm. Attached to the uninhabited places of America by their taste and their passions, to Europe by their religion, their principles, and their ideas, they mix the love of savage life with the pride of civilization and prefer the Indians to their compatriots without, however, recognizing them as their equals.

So we resumed our journey and, advancing always with the same rapidity, at the end of a half-hour we reached the house of a pioneer. Before the

door of this cabin an Indian family has set up a temporary dwelling. An old woman, two young girls, several children crouched around a fire to whose heat the remains of a whole deer were exposed. A few steps from there on the grass, a completely nude Indian warmed himself in the rays of the sun while a small child rolled around near him in the dust. There our silent companion stopped; he left us without taking our leave and sat down gravely amid his compatriots. What had been able to lead this man to follow the path of our horses in this way for two leagues? That is what we were never able to find out. After eating in this place, we remounted our horses and continued our march through a not very thick cluster of high trees. The thicket had been burned previously as could be seen by the charred remnants of a few trees that were lying on the grass. The ground is covered today by ferns that are spread as far as you can see beneath the forest covering.

A few leagues further my horse lost his shoe, which caused us intense concern. Near there fortunately, we met a planter who managed to reshoe it. Without this meeting I doubt that we would have been able to go further, for we were then approaching the extreme limit of cleared lands. This same man who had enabled us to continue our journey, urged us to hurry up; day was beginning to fade and two long leagues still separated us from *Flint River* where we wanted to go to sleep.

Soon, in fact, a profound darkness began to surround us. We *had to march.* The night was calm but freezing. Such a profound silence and such a complete calm reigned in the depths of these forests that you would have said that all the forces of nature were as if paralyzed there. You heard only the uncomfortable buzzing of mosquitoes and the noise of the steps of our horses. From time to time you noticed in the distance an Indian fire before which an austere and immobile profile was outlined in the smoke. At the end of an hour we arrived at a place where the road divided. Two paths opened at this spot. Which one to take? The choice was delicate; one of them led to a small stream whose depth we did not know, the other to a clearing. The rising moon then showed before us a valley full of debris. Further off we noticed two houses. It was so important not to get lost in

such a place and at this hour that we resolved to get some information before going further. My companion remained to hold the horses, and throwing my rifle over my shoulder, I descended into the small valley. Soon I noticed that I was going into a very recent clearing; immense trees not yet stripped of their branches covered the ground. I managed by jumping from one to another to reach the houses rapidly enough, but the same stream that we had already encountered separated me from them. Fortunately [{the new proprietor of the place, probably wanting to establish a mill, had thrown trees into the stream to stop its flow}] its flow was hampered at this place by large oaks that the pioneer's ax had probably hurled there. I succeeded in sliding along these trees and I finally reached the other side. I approached these two houses with caution, fearing that they were Indian wigwams; they were still not finished; I found the doors open and no voice responded to mine. I returned to the banks of the stream where I could not help myself from admiring for several minutes the sublime horror of this place. The valley seemed to form an immense arena surrounded on all sides by the foliage of the woods like a black curtain, and at the center the light of the moon, breaking through, created a thousand fantastic images that played in silence amid the debris of the forest. Moreover, no noise whatsoever, no sound of life arose from this solitude. I finally thought of my companion and I cried out loudly to let him know the result of my search, to get him to cross the stream and to come to find me. My voice echoed for a long time amid the solitude that surrounded me. But I got no response. I cried out again and listened again. The same silence of death reigned in the forest. Worry seized me, and I ran along the stream to find the path that crossed its course farther down. Reaching there, I heard in the distance the step of horses and soon after I saw Beaumont himself. Astonished by my long absence, he had taken the gamble of advancing toward the stream; he was already in the shallows when I had called him. My voice had not been able to reach him. He told me that on his side he had made all efforts to make himself heard and, like me, had been frightened not to receive a response. Without the ford that served as our point of reunion, we would perhaps

have searched for each other a large part of the night. We retook our route promising each other indeed not to separate again, and three quarters of an hour from there we finally noticed a clearing, two or three cabins, and what pleased us most, a light.[s] The river that extended like a purple thread to the end of the valley conclusively proved to us that we had arrived at *Flint River.* Soon in fact the barking of dogs made the woods echo, and we found ourselves before a *log house* separated from us by a single fence. As we prepared to cross it, the moon revealed to us on the other side a large black bear standing upright on its paws and pulling on its chain, indicating as clearly as it could its intention to give us a very fraternal embrace. "What the devil is this country," I said, "where you have bears as watchdogs." "We must call," my companion replied to me. "If we try to cross the fence, we will have difficulty explaining the reason to the gatekeeper." So we shouted out so loudly and so well that a man finally appeared at the window. After examining us in the moonlight: "Come in, Sirs," he said to us; "Trinc, go lie down. To your kennel, I tell you. They are not robbers." The bear waddled away and we entered. We were half-dead with fatigue. We asked our

s. I see a light; I get off my horse; I walk straight toward the light that struck my eyes. After walking for five minutes, I am near enough to distinguish a house of wood without a door and half-covered. Someone was walking around inside without appearing, and it seemed to me that someone was trying hard to hide the light that illuminated the interior. Finally, using the mildest and most humble voice in order to reassure the people of this habitation who could take me for a robber, I ask if they can point out to me the house of Mr. Todds [Todd (ed.)]. (This is the name of the person we wanted to visit at Flint River.) Then a half-dressed woman appears, carrying a torch in her hand, and says to me in the most obliging way that the house of Mr. Todds is in the neighborhood and not far away. (This unfortunate woman was alone in this abandoned house open to all the wind.) I did not have the time to sympathize more with her misfortune, and I returned to rejoin Tocqueville, not without difficulty, given that I was stuck in a swamp where I thought for an instant that I would remain. Finally we found refuge with Mr. Todds, and at 11 o'clock we were in bed, one in a bed, the other on the floor.

Letter of Beaumont to Ernest de Chabrol, 2 August 1831, *Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 113.

"Uncle John Todd" was the first settler to come to Flint. In 1830, he had constructed a small inn, "Todd's tavern," which over the years became a celebrated place in the region. George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 258–59.

host if we could have some oats. Surely, he said; he immediately began to reap the closest field with all American calm and doing it as he would have in full day. During this time we unsaddled our mounts and, not having a stable, tied them to the fences that we had just crossed. Having thus considered our travel companions, we began to think about our shelter. There was only one bed in the house. Since it went to Beaumont by lot, I wrapped myself in my coat and, lying on the floor, slept as profoundly as is suitable for a man who has just done fifteen leagues on horseback.

* * * * *

The next day, July 25, our first concern was to ask about a guide. A wilderness of fifteen leagues separates *Flint River* from Saginaw, and the road that leads there is a narrow path, scarcely recognizable by sight. Our host approved our plan and soon after he brought in two Indians in whom, he assured us, we could have complete confidence. One was a child, thirteen or fourteen years old. The other a young man of eighteen.[t] The body of the latter, without yet having the vigorous forms of mature age, already gave the idea of agility combined with strength. He was of average height, his stature was straight and slim, his limbs flexible and well-proportioned. Long braids fell from his bare head. In addition he had carefully painted on his face black and red lines in the most symmetrical manner. A ring passed through the septum of his nose; a necklace and earrings completed his outfit. His war gear was no less remarkable. On one side a battle ax, the famous tomahawk; on the other, a long sharp knife with which the savages remove the scalp of the defeated. Around his neck was suspended a bull's horn that served as his powder flask, and he held a carbine with a grooved barrel in his right hand. As with most Indians, his look was fierce and his smile benevolent. Next to him, as if to complete the picture, walked a dog with upright ears, elongated muzzle, much more like a fox than any other

t. "We were provided with an Indian guide, a young man twenty years old. *Sagan-Kuisko,* of the Chippewa nation" (pocket notebook 2, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 168).

type of animal, and whose fierce appearance was in perfect harmony with the countenance of the man leading it. After examining our new companion with an attention that he did not appear to notice for a single moment, we asked him what he wanted from us as the price for the service that he was going to give us. The Indian answered with a few words in his language and the American, hastening to speak, informed us that what the savage asked could be evaluated at two dollars. "Since these poor Indians," our host added charitably, "do not know the value of money, you will give me the dollars and I will gladly take charge of providing him the equivalent." I was curious to see what the worthy man called the equivalent of two dollars, and I followed him quietly into the place where the market was. I saw him deliver to our guide a pair of moccasins and a pocket handkerchief, objects whose total value certainly did not amount to half of the sum. The Indian withdrew very satisfied and I fled silently, saying like La Fontaine: Ah! if lions knew how to paint!

Moreover, it is not only Indians that the American pioneers take for fools. We ourselves were victims every day of their extreme greed for profit. It is very true that they do not steal. That have too much enlightenment to commit something so imprudent, but nonetheless I have never seen an innkeeper of a large city overcharge with more shamelessness than these inhabitants of the wilderness among whom I imagined to find primitive honesty and the simplicity of patriarchal mores.

Everything was ready. We mounted our horses and, fording the stream that forms the extreme limit between civilization and the wilderness, we entered for good into the empty forest.

Our two guides walked or rather leapt like wild cats over the obstacles in our path. If we happened to encounter a fallen tree, a stream, a swamp, they pointed with their finger to the best path, went by and did not even turn back to see us get by the difficulty; used to counting only on himself, the Indian conceives with difficulty that another man needs help. He knows how to serve you as needed, but no one has yet taught him the art of improving the service by consideration and concern. This way of acting would nonetheless have led to some comments on our part, but it was impossible

to make a single word understood by our companions. And then! we felt completely in their power. There in fact the tables were turned; plunged into a perfect darkness, reduced to his own resources, civilized man walked blind, incapable, not only of finding his own way in the labyrinth that he was going through, but even of finding the means to sustain his life. It is amid these same difficulties that the savage triumphed; for him the forest had no veil, he found himself as if in his own country; he walked there with his head high, guided by an instinct surer than the compass of the navigator. At the top of the tallest trees, beneath the thickest foliage, his eye found the prey that the European would have passed and repassed in vain a hundred times.

From time to time our Indians stopped; they put their finger to their lips to indicate to us to be quiet and gestured to us to dismount. Guided by them, we came to a place where you could see game. It was a singular sight to see the disdainful smile with which they led us by the hand like children and brought us finally near the object that they had seen for a long time.[u]

But as we advanced, the last traces of man faded. Soon everything ceased even to announce the presence of the savage, and we had before us the spectacle that we had been chasing for such a long time, the interior of a virgin forest.

In the middle of a not very dense thicket, through which objects at a fairly great distance could be seen, a tall cluster of trees composed almost totally of pines and oaks arose in a single burst. Forced to grow on a very limited terrain almost entirely without the rays of the sun, each of these trees goes up rapidly in order to find air and light. As straight as the mast of a ship, each tree does not take long to rise above everything that surrounds it. Having reached an upper region, it then tranquilly spreads its branches and surrounds itself with their shade. Others soon follow it into this elevated sphere and, intertwining their branches, all form like an im-

u. "Seeing that I tried to kill birds, he showed them to me when I did not see them; in this way he made it possible for me to kill a very beautiful bird of prey. We hunted in this way without getting off our horses, and when we fired, our peaceful mounts did not give the least sign of emotion." Letter of Beaumont to Ernest de Chabrol (2 August 1831), *Lettres d'Amérique,* p. 114.

mense canopy above the earth that supports them. Beneath this humid and unchanging vault, the appearance changes and the scene takes on a new character. A majestic order reigns above our heads. Near the earth everything presents on the contrary the image of confusion and of chaos. Some trunks, incapable of bearing their branches any longer, have split halfway from the top and no longer present anything to view except a sharp and broken tip. Others, shaken for a long time by the wind, have been thrown whole onto the ground; torn out of the earth, their roots form like so many natural ramparts behind which several men could easily take shelter. Immense trees, held up by the branches that surround them, rest suspended in air and fall into dust without touching the earth. Among us, there is no country, no matter how unpopulated, in which a forest is left alone enough for the trees, after tranquilly following their course, to fall finally due to decrepitude.[v] It is man who strikes them in their prime and who rids the

v. Also it is against the woods that all the energy of civilized man seems to be directed. With us, wood is cut for use; here, it is cut to destroy. Prodigious efforts are made to obliterate it, and often these efforts are powerless. Vegetation is so rapid that it mocks the endeavors of man. The Americans in the country spend half their life cutting trees, and their children at a young age already learn how to use the hook and the ax against the trees, their enemies. Also in America, there is a general sentiment of hatred against trees. The prettiest country houses sometimes lack shade for this reason. It is believed that the absence of trees is the sign of civilization. Nothing seems uglier than a forest; on the other hand, people find a field of wheat charming. Besides, these fields of wheat present a strange appearance. All are full of tree trunks that have been crudely cut at the height of a man and whose presence on the land still recalls, despite destruction, the memory of these forests that they would like to forget. Letter of Beaumont to his sister, Eugénie (Auburn, 17 July 1831), *Lettres d'Amérique,* pp. 92–93.

In 1851, Tocqueville writes to Madame de Circourt:

> M. de Chateaubriand himself portrayed the true wilderness, at least the one that I know, with false colors. He seems to have crossed, without seeing it, this endless, humid, cold, gloomy, somber and silent forest that follows you to the top of the mountains, descends with you to the bottom of the valleys, and that more than the ocean itself gives the idea of the immensity of nature and of the ridiculous smallness of man (*Correspondance avec Madame de Circourt, OC,* XVIII, p. 52).

On the differences between Tocqueville's forest and that of Chateaubriand, see Eva

forest of their remains. [≠Our woods always present the image of youth or of strength. In the forests of the New World, on the contrary, you see trees of all ages, from the weakest shoot to the hundred-year-old oak.≠] In the uninhabited areas of America, nature in its omnipotence is the sole agent of ruin, as well as the sole power of reproduction. Just as in forests subjected to the dominion of man, death strikes here constantly; but no one takes responsibility for clearing the remains that death has caused. Every day adds to the amount. They fall, they accumulate on each other; time cannot reduce them to dust quickly enough to prepare new places. There side by side several generations of dead trees are found lying together. Some at the last stage of decay no longer offer anything to view except a long line of red dust drawn on the grass. But others, already half-consumed by time, still preserve their forms. There are some finally that, just fallen, still spread their long branches on the ground and halt the steps of the traveler with an obstacle that he had not expected. Amid these divers remains, the work of reproduction goes on without ceasing. Shoots, climbing plants, weeds of all types grow up across all the obstacles. They creep along the fallen trunks; they worm into their dust; they lift up and break the bark that still covers them. [They slip between these immobile cadavers, creep along their surface, penetrate beneath their withered bark, lift up and scatter their powdery remains.] Life and death here are as if face to face; they seem to have wanted to mix and mingle their work.[w]

We often happened to admire one of those calm and serene evenings at sea, when the sails, flapping peacefully along the masts, leave the sailors not knowing from which direction the breeze will come. All of nature at rest is no less imposing in the uninhabited areas of the New World than on the immensity of the sea. When at midday the rays of the sun beat down on the forest, you often hear echoing in its depths something like a long moan,

Doran, "Two Men and a Forest: Chateaubriand, Tocqueville and the American Wilderness," *Essays in French Literature,* 13, 1976, pp. 44–61.

w. Tocqueville uses the same description in *Voyage to Lake Oneida* and in the first volume, p. 38.

a plaintive cry that lingers in the distance. It is the final effort of the wind that is expiring. Then everything around you falls into a silence so profound, an immobility so complete that your soul feels penetrated by a sort of religious terror. The traveler stops, he looks around. Pressed together, intertwined in their branches, the trees of the forest seem to form only a single whole, an immense and indestructible edifice, under whose vaults reigns an eternal darkness. In no matter which direction he looks, he sees only a field of violence and destruction. Broken trees, torn trunks, everything announces that here the elements are perpetually at war. But the struggle is interrupted. You would say that at the order of a supernatural power, movement is suddenly halted. Half-broken branches still seem to hold on by a few hidden bonds to the trunk that no longer offers them support; trees already uprooted have not had the time to come to earth and remain suspended in the air. The traveler listens, he holds his breath with fear the better to grasp the slightest reverberation of existence; no sound, no murmur is heard.

More than once in Europe we happened to find ourselves lost deep in the woods, but always a few sounds of life came to our ears. It was the distant ringing from the church tower of the nearest village, the step of a traveler, the ax of the woodsman, the explosion of a firearm, the barking of a dog, or only that confused murmur that arises from a civilized country. Here, not only man is missing, but even the sound of animals is not heard. The smallest among them have left these places to move closer to human habitation; the largest, to move still further away. The animals that remain keep hidden out of the sunlight. Thus everything is immobile in the woods, everything is silent beneath its leaves. You would say that the Creator has for one moment turned His face away and that the forces of nature are paralyzed.

Not only in this case, moreover, did we notice the singular analogy that exists between the sight of the ocean and the appearance of a wild forest. In both spectacles, the idea of immensity assails you. The continuity of the same scenes, their monotony astonishes and hinders the imagination. We perhaps found the sentiment of isolation and abandonment that had seemed so heavy to us in the middle of the Atlantic stronger and more

poignant in the uninhabited areas of the New World. On the sea at least the traveler contemplates a vast horizon toward which he directs his view with hope. But in this ocean of leaves, who can point out the road? Toward which objects to turn your eyes? In vain do you go up to the top of the largest trees; others still higher surround you. It is useless to climb hills; everywhere the forest seems to move with you, and this same forest extends before you from the Arctic Pole to the Pacific Ocean. You can travel thousands of leagues in its shadow, and you move always, but without appearing to change place.

* * * * *

But it is time to return to the road to Saginaw. We had already walked for five hours in the most complete ignorance of the places where we found ourselves, when our Indians stopped and the oldest who was called Sagan-Cuisco drew a line in the sand. He pointed to one end while crying: Miché-Conté-Ouinque (the Indian name for *Flint River)* and the opposite end while pronouncing the name of Saginaw, and making a dot in the middle of the line, he indicated to us that we had reached the mid-point of the road and that we had to rest for a few moments. The sun was already high above the horizon and we would have accepted with pleasure the invitation made to us, if we had noticed water within reach. But not seeing any in the vicinity, we made a sign to the Indian that we wanted to eat and drink at the same time. He immediately understood us and began to walk again with the same rapidity as before. An hour later, he stopped again and showed us a place thirty steps away in the woods where he gestured that there was water. Without awaiting our response or without helping us unsaddle our horses, he went there himself; we hastened to follow him. The wind had recently overturned a large tree in this place. In the hole where its roots had been was a bit of rainwater. It was the fountain to which our guide led us without having the appearance of thinking that someone could hesitate to use such a drink. We opened our bag; another misfortune! The heat had absolutely spoiled our provisions and we were completely reduced to dining on a very small piece of bread, the only one we had been able to find at *Flint River.* Add to that a cloud of mosquitoes attracted by the presence of the water, that had to be battled with one hand while putting the

piece of bread in your mouth with the other, and you will have the idea of a rustic dinner in a virgin forest. While we ate, our Indians remained seated, arms crossed, on the fallen trunk that I spoke about. When they saw that we had finished, they gestured to us that they also were hungry. We showed them our empty bag. They shook their heads without saying a word. The Indian does not know what regular hours for meals are. He gorges himself with food when he can and then goes without until he again finds something to satisfy the appetite. Wolves act the same in similar circumstances. Soon we thought about remounting, but we noticed with great fright that our mounts had disappeared. Bitten by mosquitoes and goaded by hunger they had gone away from the path where we had left them, and it was only with difficulty that we were able to find their trail. If we had remained inattentive for a quarter-hour more, we would have awakened like Sancho with a saddle between his legs. We blessed with all our hearts the mosquitoes that had made us think so quickly about leaving, and we resumed our way. The track that we followed did not take long to become more and more difficult to recognize. At every instant, our horses had to force their way through dense thickets or jump over immense tree trunks that barred our way. At the end of two hours of an extremely difficult road, we finally reached the bank of a river that was not very deep but steeply hemmed in. We forded it and, having reached the top of the opposite bank, we saw a field of corn and two cabins quite similar to *log houses.* We realized as we drew near that we were in a small Indian settlement. The *log houses* were wigwams. Moreover, the most profound solitude reigned there as in the surrounding forest. Coming before the first of these abandoned dwellings, Sagan-Cuisco stopped, he attentively examined all the surrounding objects, then putting down his carbine and approaching us, he first drew a line in the sand, indicating to us in the same way as before that we had not yet completed two-thirds of the road; then, getting up, he showed us the sun and made a sign that it was rapidly descending toward sunset. He then looked at the wigwam and closed his eyes. This language was very understandable; he wanted us to sleep in this place. I admit that the proposition greatly surprised and scarcely pleased us. We had not eaten since morning

and we didn't care very much about sleeping without eating. The somber and wild majesty of the scenes that we had witnessed since morning, the total isolation in which we found ourselves, the fierce countenance of our guides with whom it was impossible to make a connection, nothing in all of that was of a nature to give us confidence. Moreover, there was something singular in the behavior of the Indians that did not reassure us. The route that we had just followed for two hours seemed even less traveled than the one that we had followed before. No one had ever told us that we had to pass by an Indian village, and on the contrary everyone had assured us that you could go from Flint River to Saginaw in a single day. So we could not conceive why our guides wanted to keep us for the night in the wilderness. We insisted on moving. The Indians gestured that we would be surprised by darkness in the woods. To force our guides to continue on their road would have been a dangerous endeavor. We decided to tempt their greed. But the Indian is the most philosophical of all men. He has few needs and hence few desires. Civilization has no hold on him; he is unaware of or disdains its sweet pleasures. I had noticed, however, that Sagan-Cuisco had paid particular attention to a small bottle in wicker that hung at my side. A bottle that does not break is something whose utility he had grasped and that had aroused a real admiration in him. My rifle and my bottle were the only parts of my European gear that had appeared to arouse his envy. I gestured to him that I would give him my bottle if he led us immediately to Saginaw. The Indian then appeared violently torn. He looked again at the sun, then the ground. Finally making his decision, he grabbed his carbine; putting his hand to his mouth, he let out two cries of: Oh! Oh! and rushed before us into the undergrowth. We followed him at a fast trot, and forcing open a path before us, we had soon lost sight of the Indian dwellings. Our guides ran in this way for two hours more rapidly than they had done as yet; but night overtook us, and the last rays of the sun had just disappeared in the trees of the forest when Sagan-Cuisco was surprised by a violent nosebleed. However accustomed this young man as well as his brother seemed to be to bodily exercise, it was evident that fatigue and the lack of food began to exhaust his strength. We began to be afraid

that they would give up the undertaking and would want to sleep at the foot of a tree. So we decided to have them alternately mount our horses. The Indians accepted our offer without astonishment or humility. It was something bizarre to see, these men half-naked seated solemnly on an English saddle and carrying our gamebags and our rifles slung over their shoulders, while we went with difficulty on foot before them. Night finally came, a freezing dampness began to spread under the foliage. Darkness then gave the forest a new and terrible appearance. The eye could no longer see anything around except masses heaped up in confusion, without order or symmetry, bizarre and disproportionate forms, incoherent scenes, fantastic images that seemed borrowed from the sick imagination of someone feverish. (The gigantesque and the ridiculous there were as close as in the literature of our time.) Never had our steps brought forth as many echoes; never had the silence of the forest seemed so fearsome to us. You would have said that the buzzing of the mosquitoes was the sole breath of this sleeping world. As we advanced, the shadows became deeper; only from time to time did a firefly crossing the woods trace a sort of luminous line in its depths. We recognized too late the correctness of the advice of the Indian, but it was no longer a matter of going back. So we continued to march as rapidly as our strength and the night allowed us to do. At the end of an hour we came out of the woods and found ourselves on a vast prairie. Our guides three times yelled out a savage cry that reverberated like discordant notes of the tom-tom. Someone answered in the distance. Five minutes later we were on the bank of a river whose opposite side the darkness prevented us from seeing. The Indians came to a halt at this place; they covered themselves with their blankets to avoid the biting of the mosquitoes; sleeping on the grass, they soon formed nothing more than a ball of wool hardly visible and in which it would have been impossible to recognize the form of a man. We ourselves stood on the ground and waited patiently for what would follow. At the end of several minutes a slight noise was heard and something approached the shore. It was an Indian canoe about ten feet long and formed out of a single tree. The man who was crouching at the bottom of this fragile small boat wore the costume and had all the appearance of

an Indian. He addressed a word to our guides who at his command hastened to remove the saddles from our horses and to put them in the dugout. As I prepared to climb in, the supposed Indian advanced toward me, put two fingers on my shoulder and said to me with a Norman accent that made me start: "Don't go too fast, there are times here when people drown."[x] My horse would have spoken to me, and I would not, I believe, have been more surprised. I viewed the man who had spoken to me and whose face, struck by the first light of the moon, then shone like a copper sphere: "So who are you," I said to him; "French seems to be your language and you have the appearance of an Indian?" He answered me that he was a *bois-brulé,* that is to say the son of a Canadian man and an Indian woman. I will often have the occasion to speak about this singular race of half-breeds that covers all the frontiers of Canada and a part of those of the United States. For the moment I thought only about the pleasure of speaking my native language. Following the advice of our compatriot, the savage, I sat down at the bottom of the canoe and kept my balance as much as possible. The horse got into the river and began to swim as soon as the Canadian pushed the skiff with the paddle, all the while singing in a low voice an old French tune, of whose verse I grasped only the first two lines:

Between Paris and Saint-Denis
There was a girl

We thus arrived without accident on the other side. The canoe returned immediately to get my companion. I will remember all my life the moment when for the second time it approached the shore. The moon, which was full, then rose precisely above the prairie that we had just crossed. Half of the circle of the moon appeared alone on the horizon; you would have said a mysterious door through which the light of another sphere escaped toward us. The moonlight that emerged reflected on the waters of the river

x. "<I want to get into the boat while holding my horse by the bridle. 'The saddle must be removed,' the supposed Indian said to me, 'there are times here when people drown.' Norman accent, barely intelligible French. I remove my saddle, place it in the canoe, place myself beside it. The large Indian puts himself at the end, holding the bridle. The Canadian rows; the horse swimming>" (pocket notebook 2, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, p. 170).

and glistening reached me. On the very line on which this pale light shimmered, the Indian dugout advanced; you did not notice the oars, you did not hear the noise of the paddles, it glided rapidly and without effort, long, narrow and black, similar to an alligator of the Mississippi that stretched toward the bank to seize its prey. Crouched at the front of the canoe, Sagan-Cuisco, his head leaning against his knees, showed only the shining braids of his hair. At the other end, the Canadian rowed in silence, while behind him, the horse made the water of the Saginaw splash with the effort of his powerful chest. There was in this whole spectacle a wild grandeur that then made and has since left a profound impression on our souls. Disembarked on the shore we hurried to go to a house that the moon had just revealed to us one hundred steps from the river and where the Canadian assured us that we would be able to find shelter. We managed in fact to get settled comfortably there, and we would probably have regained our strength by a deep sleep if we had been able to rid ourselves of the myriad mosquitoes that filled the house; but that we could never manage to do. The animal that is called *mosquito* in English and *maringouin* in Canadian French is a small insect similar in everything to the *cousin* of France from which it differs only in size. It is generally larger and its proboscis is so strong and so sharp that woolen fabric alone can protect against its bites. These small gnats are the plague of the American wilderness. Their presence would be enough to make a long stay unbearable. As for me, I declare that I have never experienced a torment similar to what they made me suffer throughout the entire course of this trip and particularly during our stay at Saginaw. During the day they prevented us from drawing, writing, remaining still for a single moment; at night, they circled by the thousands around us; every part of the body that you left exposed served immediately as their rendezvous. Awakened by the pain caused by the bite, we covered our heads with our sheets; their sting passed through; chased, pursued by them in this way, we got up and went to breathe the outside air until fatigue finally brought us a difficult and interrupted sleep.

* * * * *

We went out very early and the first sight that struck us as we left the house was the view of our Indians who, rolled up in their blankets near the door, slept next to their dogs.

We then saw for the first time in daylight the village of Saginaw that we had come so far to find.

A small cultivated plain, bordered on the south by a beautiful and tranquil river, on the east and on the north by the forest, makes up for the present the entire territory of the emerging city.[y]

Near us arose a house whose structure announced the prosperity of the owner. It was the one where we had just spent the night. A dwelling of the same type was noticeable from the other end of the clearing. In between and along the edge of the woods, two or three *log houses* were half lost in the foliage. On the opposite bank of the river, a prairie extended like a limitless ocean on a calm day. A column of smoke escaped then from the prairie and climbed peacefully toward the sky. By following its direction toward the earth, we discovered two or three wigwams whose conical form and pointed tips blended into the grasses of the prairie.

An overturned plow, oxen returning to plowing, some half-wild horses completed the picture.

In whatever direction you looked, your eye searched in vain for the spire of a Gothic church tower, the wooden cross that marks the road, or the moss-covered doorway of the presbytery. These venerable remnants of ancient Christian civilization have not been carried into the wilderness; nothing there yet awakens the idea of the past or of the future. You do not even find places of rest consecrated to those who are no more. Death has not had the time to reclaim its sphere or mark out its field.

Here man still seems to come furtively into life. Several generations do

y. Variant: "≠The village of Saginaw is made up of four or five houses scattered over a small cultivated plain surrounded on all sides by the forest {the cabins are placed a hundred steps from the river}. The river that is called the Saginaw and that has given its name to the clearing runs in {a deep bed until} Lake Huron.≠" Grateful for Tocqueville's description, the city of Saginaw has built a center for the federal administration as a reproduction of the Tocqueville château (Richard Reeves, *American Journey,* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), p. 188.

not gather around his cradle to express hopes that are often false, and to give themselves to premature joys that the future will belie. His name is not inscribed in the records of the city. Religion does not come to mix its touching solemnities with the solicitudes of the family. The prayers of a woman, a few drops of water poured on the head of the infant by the hand of the father, quietly open the gates of heaven to him.

The village of Saginaw is the last point inhabited by Europeans to the northwest of the vast Michigan peninsula. It can be considered like an outpost, a sort of sentry point that whites have placed amid the Indian nations.

The revolutions of Europe, the tumultuous clamor that is constantly arising from the civilized world, reach here only now and then, and are like the echo of a sound whose nature and origin the ears cannot make out.

Sometimes it will be an Indian who, while passing, will recount with the poetry of the wilderness some of these sad realities of the life of society; a forgotten newspaper in the knapsack of a hunter; or only that vague rumor that is propagated by unknown voices and almost never fails to alert men that something extraordinary is happening under the sun.

Once a year, a ship ascending the course of the Saginaw comes to reconnect this link detached from the great European chain that already envelops the world with its coils. It brings to the new settlement the diverse products of industry and in turn takes away the fruits of the land.

At the time of our passage, thirty persons alone, men, women, old people and children, composed this small society, an embryo scarcely formed, an emerging seed entrusted to the wilderness, that the wilderness is to make fruitful.

Chance, interest, or passions had gathered these thirty persons in this narrow space. Moreover, no common bond existed between them and they differed profoundly from each other. You noticed Canadians, Americans, Indians and half-breeds there.

Philosophers have believed that human nature everywhere the same only varied according to the institutions and the laws of different societies. That is one of those opinions that every page of the history of the world seems to belie. Nations, like individuals, all appear with a physiognomy that is

their own. The characteristic features of their countenance are reproduced throughout all the transformations that they undergo. Laws, mores, religions change, empire and wealth are displaced; the external appearance varies, the dress differs, prejudices fade or are substituted for others. Among these diverse changes you always recognize the same people. Something inflexible appears amid human flexibility.

The men who inhabit this small, cultivated plain belong to two races that for nearly a century have existed on the American soil and obeyed the same laws. [{Before coming to America, their fathers had lived under the same European sky; an arm of the sea more narrow than the Saint Lawrence River separated their countries.}] But they have nothing in common between them. They are English and French, just as they appear on the banks of the Seine and the Thames.

Enter this cabin of foliage, you will meet a man whose cordial welcome and open countenance will announce to you from the beginning the taste for social pleasures and lack of concern about life. At the first moment you will perhaps take him for an Indian; subjected to savage life, he has willingly adopted their habits, customs and almost their mores. He wears moccasins, a hat of otter-skin, a woolen blanket. He is an indefatigable hunter, lying in wait, living on wild honey and buffalo meat. This man has nonetheless still remained no less a Frenchman, cheerful, enterprising, self-important, proud of his origins, passionate lover of military glory, more vain than self-interested, a man of instinct, obeying his first movement rather than his reason, preferring making a stir to making money. In order to come to the wilderness he seems to have broken all the bonds that attached him to life; you see him with neither wife nor children. This condition is contrary to his mores, but he submits to it easily as to everything. Left to himself, he would naturally feel the stay-at-home mood; no one more than he has the taste for the domestic hearth; no one loves more to delight his sight with the appearance of the paternal church tower; but he has been torn despite himself from his tranquil habits; his imagination has been struck by new images; he has been transplanted beneath another sky; this same man feels suddenly possessed by an insatiable need for violent emotions, vicissitudes and dangers. The most civilized European has become the worshipper of savage life. He will prefer the plains to the streets of the city, hunting to

agriculture. He will make light of existence and live without concern for the future.

The whites of France, said the Indians of Canada, are as good hunters as we. Like us, they scorn the comforts of life and face the terrors of death. God had created them to inhabit the cabin of the savage and to live in the wilderness.[z]

A few steps from this man lives another European who, subject to the same difficulties, became steeled against them.

This man is cold, tenacious, mercilessly argumentative; he attaches himself to the land, and tears all that he can take from savage life. He struggles constantly against it; he despoils it daily of some of its attributes. He transports into the wilderness, piece by piece, his laws, his habits, his customs and, if he can, even the slightest refinements of his advanced civilization. The emigrant of the United States values from victory only its results; he holds that glory is a vain noise and that man comes into the world only to acquire comfort and the conveniences of life. Brave nonetheless, but brave by calculation, brave because he has discovered that there were several things more difficult to bear than death. Adventurer surrounded by his family, yet who little values intellectual pleasures and the charms of social life.

Placed on the other side of the river, amid the reeds of the Saginaw, the Indian from time to time casts a stoic glance on the habitations of his brothers from Europe. Do not think that he admires their works, or envies their lot. For the nearly three hundred years that the savage of America has struggled against the civilization that pushes and surrounds him, he has not yet learned to know and to esteem his enemy. The generations follow each other in vain among the two races. Like two parallel rivers, they flow for three hundred years toward a common abyss; a narrow space separates them, but they do not blend their waves. Not, nonetheless, that the native of the New World lacks natural aptitude, but his nature seems stubbornly to reject our ideas and our arts. Seated on his blanket amid the smoke of his hut, the Indian looks with scorn on the comfortable dwelling of the

z. Cf. "Some ideas on the reasons that go against the French having good colonies," *Écrits et discours politiques, OC,* III, 1, pp. 36–37.

European; as for him, he proudly takes pleasure in his misery, and his heart swells and rises at the images of his barbaric independence. He smiles bitterly seeing us torment our lives in order to acquire useless riches. What we call industry, he calls shameful subjection. He compares the farmer to the ox that painfully traces his furrow. What we call the conveniences of life, he calls the toys of children or the refinements of women. He only envies our weapons. When man can shelter his head for the night under a tent of leaves, when he is able to light a fire to chase away the mosquitoes in the summer and to protect himself from cold in the winter, when his dogs are good and the country full of game, what more can he ask from the eternal Being?

On the other bank of the Saginaw, near the European clearings and so to speak on the borders of the Old and the New World, arises a rustic cabin more comfortable than the wigwam of the savage, more crude than the home of the civilized man. This is the dwelling of the half-breed. When we presented ourselves for the first time at the door of this half-civilized hut, we were completely surprised to hear in the interior a soft voice that chanted hymns of penitence to an Indian tune. We stopped a moment to listen. The modulations of sound were slow and profoundly melancholy; we easily recognized the plaintive harmony that characterizes all the songs of the man of the wilderness. We entered. The master was absent. Seated in the middle of the room, her legs crossed on a mat, a young woman worked making moccasins; with her foot she rocked an infant whose coppery color and features announced its double origin. This woman was dressed like one of our peasant women, except that her feet were naked and her hair fell freely over her shoulders. Seeing us, she became quiet with a kind of respectful fear. We asked her if she was French. "No," she answered smiling. "English?" "Not that either," she said; she lowered her eyes and added: "I am only a savage." Child of two races, raised using two languages, nourished with diverse beliefs and reared with opposing prejudices, the half-breed forms a combination as inexplicable to others as to himself. The images of the world, when his crude brain happens to think about them, appear to him only as an inextricable chaos which his mind cannot escape. Proud of his European origin, he scorns the wilderness, and yet he loves the wild liberty that reigns there. He admires civilization and cannot com-

pletely submit to its dominion. His tastes are in contradiction to his ideas, his opinions to his mores. Not knowing how to be guided by the uncertain light that illumines it, his soul struggles painfully, wrapped in a universal doubt. He adopts opposing customs; he prays at two altars; he believes in the Redeemer of the world and in the amulets of the medicine man; and he reaches the end of his course not having been able to sort out the obscure problem of his existence.

So in this forgotten corner of the world the hand of God had already sown the seeds of diverse nations; several different races, several distinct peoples already find themselves face to face.

Some exiled members of the great human family have met in the immensity of the woods, their needs are common; they have to struggle together against the beasts of the forest, hunger, the harshness of the seasons. They are hardly thirty in the middle of a wilderness in which everything rejects their efforts, and they cast on each other only looks of hatred and suspicion. Skin color, poverty or comfort, ignorance or enlightenment have already established indestructible classifications among them; national prejudices, the prejudices of education and birth divide them and isolate them.

Where to find in a more narrow frame a more complete picture of the miseries of our nature? A feature is still missing however.

The deep lines that birth and opinion have drawn between the destinies of these men, do not cease with life, but extend beyond the tomb. Six diverse religions or sects share the faith of this emerging society.

Catholicism with its formidable immobility, its absolute dogmas, its terrible anathemas and immense rewards, the religious anarchy of the Reformation, the ancient paganism find their representatives here. The unique and eternal Being who created all men in His image is worshipped here in six different ways. Men fight fervently over the heaven that each man claims exclusively as his heritage. Even more, amid the miseries of the wilderness and the misfortunes of the present, the human imagination still exhausts itself giving birth to a future of inexpressible pains. The Lutheran condemns the Calvinist to eternal fire; the Calvinist, the Unitarian; and the Catholic envelops them all in a common reprobation.

More tolerant in his crude faith, the Indian limits himself to exiling his

European brother from the happy hunting grounds that he reserves for himself. As for him, faithful to the confused traditions that his fathers bequeathed to him, he easily consoles himself for the evils of life and dies peacefully dreaming of forests always green that will never be disturbed by the ax of the pioneer, and where the deer and the beaver will come to offer themselves to his shots during the days without number of eternity.

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After breakfast we went to see the richest proprietor of the village, Mr. Williams. We found him in his shop selling to the Indians a multitude of objects of little value such as knives, glass necklaces, ear pendants. It was pitiful to see how these unfortunate men were treated by their civilized brothers from Europe. Moreover, all those that we saw there acknowledged something striking about the savages. They were good, inoffensive, a thousand times less inclined to theft than the white. It was too bad, however, that they were beginning to become informed about the value of things. And why, please? Because the profits of the trade that we conduct with them became less considerable every day. Do you see here the superiority of the civilized man? The Indian would have said in his crude simplicity, that everyday he found it more difficult to deceive his neighbor. But the white finds in the perfection of language a fortunate nuance that expresses the thing and spares the shame.

Returning from Mr. Williams we had the idea of going up the Saginaw for a distance in order to shoot the wild ducks that populate its banks. While we were busy with this hunt, a dugout came out of the reeds of the river and some Indians came to meet us in order to look at my rifle that they had seen from afar. I always noticed that this weapon, which was, however, nothing extraordinary, attracted an entirely special consideration from the savages. A rifle that can kill two men in one second and fire in the fog was, according to them, a marvel above all estimation, a masterpiece beyond price. Those who came up to us displayed as usual a great admiration. They asked where my rifle came from. Our young guide answered that it had been made on the other side of the Great Water, among the fathers of the Canadians; this did not make it, as you can believe, less precious in their eyes. They observed, however, that since the sight was not placed in the

middle of each barrel, you could not be as certain about the shot, a remark to which I admit that I did not know what to answer.

When evening came we climbed back into the canoe and, relying on the experience that we had gained during the morning, we went alone to go up an arm of the Saginaw that we had only seen briefly.

[{I do not believe that I have ever in my life more strongly felt this type of pleasure, at once physical and intellectual, that beautiful nature and a serene evening make you feel.}] The sky was cloudless, the atmosphere pure and still. The river flowed through an immense forest, but so slowly that is was almost impossible to say in which direction the current went. We always felt that, to have an accurate idea of the forests of the New World, it would be necessary to follow a few of the rivers that circulate in their shadow. The rivers are like great roads with which Providence has taken care, since the beginning of the world, to pierce the wilderness to make it accessible to man. When you clear a passage through the woods, the view is most often very limited. Moreover, the very path that you walk along is a human work. Rivers on the contrary are roads that respect no trails, and their banks freely show all that a vigorous vegetation, left to itself, can offer of great and interesting spectacles.

The wilderness was there such as it probably presented itself six thousand years ago to the view of our first fathers; an uninhabited space, flowering, delicious, fragrant; a magnificent dwelling place, a living palace, built for man, but where the master had not yet entered. The canoe glided effortlessly and noiselessly; around us reigned a universal serenity and quiet. We ourselves did not take long to feel as though weakened at the sight of such a spectacle. Our words began to become more and more rare; soon we expressed our thoughts only in a low voice. Finally we became silent, and simultaneously withdrawing our paddles, we both fell into a tranquil reverie full of inexpressible charms.

Why do human languages that find so many words for all the pains meet an invincible obstacle to making the sweetest and most natural emotions of the heart understood? Who will ever portray with fidelity those moments so rare in life when physical well-being prepares you for moral tranquillity and when something like a perfect equilibrium in the universe

is established before your eyes; when the soul, half asleep, balances between the present and the future, between the real and the possible; when, surrounded by beautiful nature, breathing a tranquil and mild atmosphere, at peace with himself, amid a universal peace, man lends an ear to the steady beating of his arteries, each pulse of which marks the passage of time that for him seems to flow drop by drop into eternity. Many men perhaps have seen the years of a long life accumulate without once experiencing anything similar to what we have just described. Those men cannot understand us. But there are some, we are sure, who will find in their memories and at the bottom of their hearts something to color our pictures with and, while reading us, will feel the recollection reawakened of a few fleeting hours that neither time nor the positive cares of life have been able to erase.

We were drawn out of our reverie by a rifle shot that suddenly echoed in the woods. The noise seemed at first to roll with a roar on the two banks of the river; then rumbling, it moved further away, until it was entirely lost in the depths of the surrounding forests. You would have said a long and fearsome war cry that civilization shouted out in its advance.

One evening in Sicily, we happened to get lost in a vast swamp that now occupies the place where formerly the city of Imera was built; the sight of this famous city that had become a wild abandoned place made a great and profound impression on us. Never in our path had we encountered a more magnificent witness to the instability of things human and to the miseries of our nature. Here, it was also an uninhabited place, but imagination, instead of going backward and trying to return toward the past, on the contrary rushed ahead and lost itself in an immense future. We wondered by what singular permission of destiny, we who had been able to contemplate the ruins of empires that no longer exist and to walk in the deserts of human making, we, children of an old people, were led to be present at one of the scenes of the primitive world and to see the still empty cradle of a great nation. These are not the more or less random predictions of wisdom. They are facts as certain as if they were accomplished. In a few years these impenetrable forests will have fallen. The noise of civilization and industry will break the silence of the Saginaw. Its echo will become silent. . . . Wharves will imprison its banks. Its waters that today flow ig-

nored and tranquil amid a nameless wilderness will be forced back in their course by the prow of ships. Fifty leagues still separate this uninhabited area from the large European settlements, and we are perhaps the last travelers allowed to contemplate it in its primitive splendor, so great is the impulse that carries the white race toward the complete conquest of the New World.[a]

It is this idea of destruction, this lurking thought of a near and inevitable change that, according to us, gives to the wilderness of America so original a character and so touching a beauty. You see it with a melancholy pleasure; you hurry in a way to admire it. The idea of this natural and wild grandeur that is going to end mingles with the magnificent images given birth by the triumphant march of civilization. You feel proud to be a man, and at the same time you feel I do not know what bitter regret about the power that God granted us over nature.[b] The soul is agitated by contrasting ideas, sentiments, but all the impressions that it receives are great and leave a profound trace.

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We wanted to leave Saginaw the next day, July 27; but because one of our horses has been hurt by its saddle, we decided to remain one more day. Lacking another way to pass the time, we went hunting in the prairies that border the Saginaw below the cleared areas. These prairies are not swampy, as you might believe. They are more or less wide plains where there are no trees although the land is excellent. The grass is hard and three to four feet high. We found only a little game and returned early. The heat was suffocating as at the approach of a storm, and the mosquitoes even more trou-

a. On a separate sheet: "In America ideas serve as the banner, not as the goal of parties./

"The head of an old man on the shoulders of a child; image of American civilization." See the note entitled "National character of Americans," in alphabetic notebook A, YTC, BIIa, and *Voyage, OC,* V, 1, pp. 208–10.

b. On the effects of a century and a half of civilization on the region crossed by Tocqueville and Beaumont, see William Serrin, "Monsieur de Tocqueville! Oh, get some water—he's fainted!" *New York Times,* 2 January 1976, p. 25, col. 2.

blesome than usual. We walked always surrounded by a dense cloud of these insects against which we had to wage a perpetual war. Woe to the man who was forced to stop. He delivered himself defenseless to a merciless enemy. I recall having been forced to load my rifle while running, so difficult was it to stand still for an instant.

As we crossed the prairie on our return, we noticed that the Canadian who served as our guide followed a small marked path and looked with the greatest care at the ground before putting down his foot. "So why are you taking so many precautions," I said to him; "are you afraid of getting wet?" "No," he answered. "But I have acquired the habit when I cross the prairies always to look where I put my foot in order not to step on a rattlesnake." "What the devil," I began again, jumping onto the path, "are there rattlesnakes here?" "Oh yes indeed," replied my American Norman with an imperturbable sang-froid, *"the prairie is full of them."* I then reproached him for not warning us sooner. He claimed that since we wore good shoes and since the rattlesnake never bit above the ankle, he had not believed that we ran any great danger.

I asked him if the bite of the rattlesnake was fatal. He answered that you always died from it in less than twenty-four hours, if you did not appeal to the Indians. They know a remedy that, given in time, saved the patient, he said.

Whatever the case, during all the rest of the way we imitated our guide and, like him, looked at our feet.

The night that followed this scorching day was one of the most difficult that I have ever passed in my life. The mosquitoes had become so troublesome that, although I was overcome by fatigue, it was impossible for me to close my eyes. Toward midnight the storm that had threatened for a long time finally broke. Not able to hope for sleep, I got up and opened the door of our cabin in order at least to breathe the cool night air. It was not raining yet, the air seemed calm; but the forest was already shaking and out of it came deep moanings and long clamorings. From time to time a lightning bolt happened to illuminate the sky. The tranquil flow of the Saginaw, the small cleared area that bordered the river, the roofs of five or six cabins, and the belt of foliage that surrounded us, appeared then for an instant like an evocation of the future. Afterward everything was lost in the deepest dark-

ness, and the formidable voice of the wilderness began again to make itself heard.

I was witnessing this great spectacle with emotion, when I heard a sigh at my side, and in the flash of a lightning bolt I noticed an Indian pressed like me against the wall of our dwelling. The storm had probably interrupted his sleep, for he cast a fixed and troubled eye on the objects around him.

Was this man afraid of thunder? Or did he see in the clash of elements something other than a passing convulsion of nature? These fleeting images of civilization that loomed up as if by themselves amid the tumult of the wilderness, did they have a prophetic meaning for him? These moans from the forest that seemed to struggle in an unequal contest, did they come to his ear like a secret warning from God, a solemn revelation of the final fate reserved for the savage races? I cannot say. But his restless lips seemed to murmur a few prayers, and all his features were stamped with a superstitious terror.

* * * * *

At five o'clock in the morning, we thought about our departure. All the Indians in the neighborhood of Saginaw had disappeared; they had left to go to receive the presents that the English give to them each year, and the Europeans were engaged in the work of the harvest. So we had to accept going back through the forest without a guide. The undertaking was not as difficult as you could believe. There is generally only one path in these vast uninhabited places, and it is only a matter of not losing the trail in order to reach the end of the journey.

So at five o'clock in the morning, we recrossed the Saginaw; we received the good-byes and the final advice of our hosts, and turning the heads of our horses, we found ourselves alone in the middle of the forest. It was not, I admit, without a grave feeling that we began to penetrate its humid depths. This same forest that then surrounded us extended behind us to the Pole and to the Pacific Ocean. A single inhabited point separated us from the limitless wilderness, and we had just left it. These thoughts, moreover, only led us to hasten the pace of our horses, and at the end of three hours we reached an abandoned wigwam and the solitary banks of the Cass River.

A point of grass that went down to the river in the shade of large trees served as our table, and we began to have lunch, having before us the view of the river whose waters, as clear as crystal, meandered through the woods.

Coming from the wigwam of the Cass River we encountered several paths. Someone had indicated to us which one we should take; but it was easy to forget a few points, or to be misunderstood in such explanations. That is what we did not fail to experience that day. The person had spoken to us about two roads, there were three; it is true that among these three roads, two came together as one further on, as we learned after, but we did not know it then and our difficulty was great.

After looking carefully, discussing things well, we did as nearly all great men do and acted more or less by chance. We forded the river as well as we could and plunged rapidly toward the southwest. More than once the path seemed ready to disappear amid the undergrowth; in other places the road seemed so little used that we had trouble believing that it led anywhere other than to some abandoned wigwam. Our compass, it is true, showed us that we were always going in the right direction. Nevertheless, we were completely reassured only when we found the place where we had eaten three days earlier. A gigantic pine whose trunk, broken by the wind, we had admired, led us to recognize the spot. We did not, however, continue our course any less rapidly, for the sun was beginning to go down. Soon we reached a clearing that usually precedes cleared lands, and as night began to surprise us we saw the Flint River. A half-hour later, we found ourselves at the door of our host. This time the bear welcomed us as old friends and got up on its hind legs only to celebrate with joy our happy return.

During this entire day we had encountered no human face. On their side, the animals had disappeared; they had probably retreated beneath the foliage to escape the heat of the day. Only now and then did we find at the bare top of some dead tree, a hawk that, immobile on a single leg and sleeping tranquilly in the rays of the sun, seemed sculpted in the same wood that it had used for support.

It was amid this profound solitude that we thought suddenly about the Revolution of 1830 [whose clearest result until now to my knowledge is to

have sent Charles X to Edinburgh, {Louis-Philippe to St. Cloud and us to Saginaw}] whose first anniversary we had just reached. I cannot say with what impetuosity the memories of July 29 took hold of our minds. The cries and the smoke of combat, the noise of the cannon, the rumble of the musketry, the still more horrible ringing of the tocsin, this entire day with its fiery atmosphere seemed to emerge suddenly from the past and to come before me like a living tableau. It was only a sudden illumination, a passing dream. When, raising my head, I looked around me, the apparition had already vanished; but never had the silence of the forest seemed more chilling, its shadows more somber, or its solitude more complete.

APPENDIX 3

Sects in America[a]

Piece that could perhaps be introduced by modifying it, by making it shorter and more striking, into the place where I will explain the type of influence that democracy exercises on the Christian religion, but [even? (ed.)] when contrary to its habits democracy accepts the principle of religion [v: some sects in America] without discussion.

* * * * *

It was Sunday. The city was as deserted as if it had been threatened by an attack that very morning and all of the people had gone to the defense of the walls. The streets were stretched with chains and the shutters of the houses were closed with so much care that you would have said that the inhabitants feared that the sun would commit some base act by coming within.

I wandered for a long time in this desert without finding anyone who could point out my route. I finally met a man whose mild and venerable appearance first attracted me. Although he was of middle age, his dress preserved a certain old-fashioned air that struck me. He wore a jacket in the French style and a hat with a wide flat brim, short trousers and flat shoes; he had neither a ruffle on his shirt nor buckles on his shoes, but his jacket was of very fine cloth, and you noticed over his whole person such an extreme neatness that you would have almost taken it for elegance.

a. This account condenses events that Tocqueville witnessed at different moments of his journey. This survey of American sects could have accompanied no matter which chapter on religion and particularly chapter 12 of the second part of the third volume. The account is on pages 9 to 15 of notebook CVa (it is a copy by Bonnel). It was published for the first time in English by James T. Schleifer in "Alexis de Tocqueville Describes the American Character: Two Previously Unpublished Portraits," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (1975): 244–58.

"Sir," I said to him, "could you point out to me a place in this city where I can pray to God?" He considered me with kindness and answered, without even putting his hand to his hat: "Thou art right, my friend. Come with me, but let us hurry, for the congregation must already be gathered."

So we quickened our pace, and soon we were opposite a large building that I had already passed by without noticing that it was a church. My guide made me enter and entered himself, walking on his tiptoes while sliding along in silence, like a man who regrets not being a pure spirit in order to make still less noise. Having reached his pew, he finally sat down, discreetly removed his gloves and, having carefully rolled them up, seemed to fall suddenly into a profound meditation. When we were seated, I noticed that the church was full which I never would have suspected, so profound was the silence [v: the tranquillity and the immobility] that reigned there. All those around me wore the costume of my guide, even the smallest children who sat gravely in their pews, dressed in the same jacket in the French style and covered by a wide-brimmed hat.

I remained there one hour and forty minutes in the same silence and the same immobility. I finally turned toward the man who brought me and said to him: "Sir, I wanted to attend a church service and it seems to me that you have led me to a gathering of the deaf and dumb." My guide, without seeming offended by my question, looked at me with the same kindness and said: "Dost thou not see that each of us is waiting for the Holy Spirit to illumine him; learn to moderate thine impatience in a holy place." I kept quiet, and soon in fact one of those attending got up and began to speak. His accents were plaintive, and each of the words that he uttered was as if isolated between two long silences; and with a very pitiful voice he said some very consoling things, for he spoke about the inexhaustible goodness of God and about the obligation that men have to help each other, whatever their belief and the color of their skin.

When he was quiet, the gathering began to flow out peacefully. As I left, still moved by the language that I had just heard, I found myself near the man who had brought me and I said to him: "It seems to me that I have just heard spoken here the word of the Gospel. But my soul is troubled;

let me know, I beg of you, if grace can be produced in a man only if he wears a cut-away jacket and uses 'thee' and 'thou' with his neighbor." My new friend reflected at length and answered: "The majority of our brothers think that is not absolutely necessary."

Content to see that no indispensable connection existed between my soul and my jacket, I regained the street with a lighter step.

A little distance from there, I noticed another church. But far from praying to God so tranquilly there,[b] on the contrary, such a great tumult was produced and such a strange clamor arose that I could not repress a curious desire, and to satisfy it I entered. It was a Methodist church. I first saw in an elevated place, a young man whose thundering voice made the vaults of the building reverberate. His hair was standing on end, his eyes seemed to shoot flames, his lips were pale and trembling, his entire body seemed agitated by a universal trembling [v: prey to an anguish]. I wanted to break through the crowd in order to go to the aid of this unfortunate man, but stopped upon discovering that he was a preacher. He spoke of the perversity of man and of the inexhaustible treasures of divine vengeance. He probed one by one all the formidable mysteries of the other life. He portrayed the Creator as constantly busy heaping up the generations in the pits of hell and as indefatigable in creating sinners as in inventing punishments. I stopped completely troubled; the congregation was even more so than I. Terror showed itself in a thousand ways on all the faces, and repentance took on at every instant the appearance of despair and fury.[c] Women lifted their children in their arms and let out lamentable cries, others struck their forehead against the earth, men convulsed in their pews while accusing themselves of their sins in a loud voice, or rolled in the dust. As the movements of the minister became more rapid and his portraits more vivid, the passions of the assembly seemed to grow, and often it was difficult not to believe yourself in one of those infernal dwellings that the preacher depicted.

I fled full of disgust and penetrated by a profound terror. Author and preserver of all things, I said to myself, is it possible that you recognize

b. In the margin: "As in the house of the Quakers."

c. The margins contain various stylistic variants of these sentences.

yourself in the horrible portrait that your creations make of you here? Must man be degraded by fear in order to raise him up to you, and can he climb to the ranks of your saints only by delivering himself to transports that make him descend below beasts?

Full of these thoughts, I walked rapidly without looking around myself, so much so that when I came to consider the place where I was, I noticed that I had left the city and walked into the middle of the woods that surround it. Nothing prompted me to retrace my steps, and I resolved to continue my route to see if I would not arrive at an inhabited place. At the end of two hours, I in fact reached a new clearing, and soon I noticed the first houses of a beautiful village.[d] A traveler just passing informed me that these (illegible word) were the property of a small religious sect called *dansars*[e] [*sic*]. It was obvious in fact that the houses of the village had been built on a common plan and by a single association. They had cost the same amount; the same air of comfort reigned. At the center of the works arose a vast hall that served as the church. I was told that the divine service was going to be celebrated there, and curiosity led me to it.

At the end of the room already drawn up were about fifty men of different ages, but all wore the same dress. It was that of European peasants of the Middle Ages. Facing them was a more or less equal number of women enveloped in white clothes like great shrouds, from head to toe. Moreover, you saw neither pulpit, nor altar, nor anything that recalled a place consecrated by Christians to the worship of the Divinity. These men and women sang songs of a lugubrious and plaintive tone. From time to time, they accompanied themselves by clapping their hands. Other times, they began to move and made a thousand rotations without losing the beat,

d. On various occasions, Beaumont gave the account of a visit to the Quaker community of Nisquayuna, not far from Albany. See the letter to Samuel R. Wood of 24 November 1831, in the Quaker Collection of Haverford College, Pennsylvania; the letter to his sister, Eugénie, of 14 July 1831 (*Lettres d'Amérique,* pp. 86–90); and *Marie,* II, pp. 205–9. Beaumont gives a general survey of American sects in *Marie,* I, pp. 258–59, and in the appendix "Notes on Religious Movements in the United States" (II, pp. 181–225).

e. Shakers.

sometimes marching in columns, sometimes gathering in a circle. Other times, they advanced toward each other as if to fight and then withdrew without touching. I was witnessing this spectacle with astonishment, when suddenly at a given signal the whole congregation began to dance. Women and men, old people and children began to jump to the point of breathlessness. They danced so long in this way that sweat ran down their faces. They finally stopped; and one of the oldest men of the company, after wiping his brow, began with a broken voice: "My brothers, let us give thanks to the Almighty who, amid all the various superstitions that disfigure humanity, has deigned finally to show us the way of salvation, and let us pray that he opens the eyes of this crowd of unfortunates who are still plunged into the darkness of error, and saves them from the eternal torments which perhaps await them."

APPENDIX 4

Political Activity in America[a]

The first evening of my arrival in the United States,[b] I saw a large crowd assembled in one of the rooms of the inn. I learned that it was a political banquet. After the meal, I drew one of the guests aside and I said to him: "Excuse, I beg you, the curiosity of a foreigner who still only imperfectly understands your language and does not know about your customs."

"Is there something that surprises you?" he said to me wiping his mouth.

"There is a great deal. I am afraid," I answered, "that some unfortunate events have happened since I left Europe."

"What do you mean?" he replied to me, all frightened.

"Yes," I began again, "while disembarking this morning at the port I saw on all sides large posters that invited people to assemble in certain places that were indicated, and during the time that it took me to come here I heard two speeches which were concerned with public affairs, and I witnessed an election. Again, just a moment ago, while I was in a corner of the room where you held the banquet, it seemed to me that most of the guests were speaking about the dangers to the State and were seeking the means to avert them [v: I listened to the speeches of several of your orators

a. This short fragment, which is found in notebook CVa, pages 37 to 41, bears no title. We reuse that which James T. Schleifer gave it in English in "Alexis de Tocqueville Describes the American Character: Two Previously Unpublished Portraits," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (1975): 244–58. This conversation recalls ideas from chapter XVII of the third part of this volume (pp. 1089–92).

b. Tocqueville and Beaumont passed the first night on the *Havre,* which brought them from France; and the second on the steamboat *President* on the way from Newport to New York. George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America,* pp. 53–57.

proposing a great number of projects, a few of which were to save the State and all of which could not fail to prevent some great misfortunes]."

"Is that all?" the American said to me. "In truth you frightened me with your unfortunate events. What surprises you repeats itself here every day."

As he moved away while saying (illegible word), I grabbed him by his jacket and begged him to stop a moment. "Wait a bit," I said again, "I still do not see clearly (illegible word)."

"What is more clear?" he said to me. "Don't you know that we are a free people and that we take care of our affairs ourselves?"[c]

"But I imagined," I began again, "that liberty was such a great good that those who possessed it were happier and consequently more tranquil than other men. I see on the contrary that you must be prey to great difficulties to torment yourselves so much to find remedies for them."

"There is no people more enlightened, more free, more virtuous than ours," <he said to me.

He was going to add a great deal more if I had not> Interrupting him at this point, "I see," I cried. "With the aid of its enlightenment the people of the United States sees its difficulties more clearly than another, and with its liberty and its virtue it works hard to remedy them."

"<Among us," the American began again, "we have the habit of never interrupting anyone.>" The American began again: "If you had not jumped right into the middle of my comments, I was going to add that we were the happiest people in the world." "This time I don't follow," I said. "<If public affairs are in a tranquil and prosperous state, why can you not speak about something other than politics? If you have good magistrates, why work constantly to give them (words crossed out)? If your rights are guaranteed, then what leads you to occupy yourself every day with the guarantee of your rights? If you enjoy a general comfort, what good is there in seeking

c. To the side: "It would try to forget that it wants to be happy in order to try to be so."

constantly to bring about comfort? And if you have easy communications among the various parts of your territory, why are you heard to talk only about roads, ports and canals?> If you have in fact what is sufficient for the strength of the soul and the well-being of the body, what more do you ask?"

"We work constantly to improve and to increase those things," he said to me.

"<I am a foreigner," I began again, "and you must excuse my surprise.>" I answered. "As for me, I would prefer to suffer tranquilly a few disparities in my lot [v: happiness] than to tire myself constantly in this way to make it better, and I still cannot comprehend that men are happy when they make so many efforts to become happier."

"You make it very clear," the American said to me, "that you are still not very worthy to be free."

At this moment one of his friends approached us saying: "This is the time when the assembly is gathered for the Poles (illegible word) let's leave. Do you want to accompany us?" the American said to me.

"Willingly," I replied; "but what is this assembly? What is it?"

"It is," he answered, "a meeting that has the purpose of expressing the sympathy of the American people in favor of the unfortunate Poles."

"And what," I said, "would you go to war with Russia?"

"Not at all," he replied, "Russia is one of our most faithful allies. We do not want to go to war with Russia, but only to express the indignation that its current conduct causes us."

"I understand," I said, "that you are going to make speeches about Poland."

"More or less," he replied, "you have it. Consequently it is more of a diversion than a serious matter."

"Good God," I began again, "I thought you were fatigued after all the difficult efforts that you made today to increase the sum of your happiness. A European would think only of going to rest and would abandon other peoples to their fate."

APPENDIX 5

Letter of Alexis de Tocqueville to Charles Stoffels

Versailles, 21 April 1830

I have greatly delayed replying to you, my dear friend, not as much however as would be indicated by the date of your letter, which bears the date 11 April, although it arrived only on the 15th, but you know what a rush of things I am caught up in. Even today, I hardly have the time to say to you all that I would like; I cannot wait any longer, however, without risking not finding you at Metz. So pardon me if I only touch very lightly on the question that you treated in depth and remarkably well (I say it to you not as a compliment).

And first, my dear friend, I will say to you that you make me out to be much more of a *killjoy* than I am naturally; you give me a conviction where I have only expressed doubts, and an absolute opinion when I have surrounded myself with qualifications. If you have done it *for the purpose of the case,* as a lawyer would say, nothing better; but if you acted involuntarily, I must point out the error and reestablish the point of departure. In general, my dear Charles, you must not imagine that, when I am discussing something with you, I have always taken care to develop fully the ideas that I put forward. You would in truth do me an honor that I do not deserve. I do not believe that you should talk with your friends as you speak in public. To stir the mind, to give the desire to reflect, to raise in passing questions that reflection comes to elaborate, such is the goal of conversation in my opinion; and I never have another with you. So, I beg of you, never take to the letter and, above all, as definitive the opinions that I do not reexamine and that I often throw out, more as a topic than as the result of reflection.

To come back to the great question that we are debating at this moment, I can put my point of view into two sentences.

1. I doubt that the advanced state of civilization is as superior to the middling state as is proclaimed, even when the march of civilization has been well conducted;

2. I believe that almost always the intellectual education of a people is poorly done and that consequently enlightenment is often a fatal gift.

Among all half-civilized peoples, you recognize almost the same base of sentiments, ideas, passions, vices and virtues, more or less hidden it is true, but always easy to recognize. Different characters are to peoples what physiognomy is to the man: they differentiate peoples externally rather than demonstrating a profound and radical difference between them.

In the same way, you always find the mixture of the same elements among nations that have reached a very high degree of civilization; here, the bad elements are more numerous than the good ones; elsewhere, the opposite happens, but all are united solely by this social state. Thus, putting aside all special application, you can form theoretically the idea of a half-civilized people and that of a completely enlightened people; no particular circumstance, good or bad, has come to influence the development of these two principles, and I compare these two peoples with each other.

Among the first of the two, among the one still half-savage, the social state is imperfect, public force is badly organized, and the struggle between it and individual force is often unequal; there is little security for the individual, little tranquillity for the mass, mores brutal, ideas simple, religion there is almost always poorly understood. That is the bad side. Here is the good: forced back on itself in this way, the soul there finds an admirable spring of action, and individual force finds unexpected development; love of country is not rational, but instinctive, and this blind instinct brings forth miracles; sentiments are clear-cut, convictions profound; consequently devotion is not rare there, enthusiasm is common and scorn for death is deep in the heart and not on the lips.

Now let us compare to this half-civilized people the one that has attained a high degree of civilization.

Among the latter, the social body has foreseen everything; the individual

gives himself the pain of being born; as for the rest, society takes hold of him in the arms of his wet-nurse, it oversees his education, opens before him the roads to fortune; it supports him in his march, deflects dangers from his head; he advances in peace under the eyes of this second providence; this tutelary power that has protected him during his life still oversees the repose of his ashes. There is the fate of civilized man. The sentiment and the spectacle of happiness soon soften the wild roughness of his nature; he becomes mild, sociable; his passions become calm; his heart seems to have expanded the ability that he had been given to feel; he finds sources of emotions and of pleasure where his fathers would never have imagined that they could exist or would have scorned looking for them. Crimes become rare, unfortunately virtues also. The soul, asleep in this long repose, no longer knows how to wake up on occasion; individual energy is almost extinguished; each man leans on the others when it is necessary to act; in all other circumstances, on the contrary, each man closes up within himself; it is the reign of egoism, convictions are shaken at the same time, for it must be clearly admitted, my dear friend, that not one single intellectual truth is established and the centuries of enlightenment are centuries of doubts and of discussion. There is no fanaticism, but there are few beliefs, consequently few of those actions, sublime in the case of another life, absurd in the opposite hypothesis. Enthusiasm there is an attack of high fever; it does not have its source in the habitual state of the soul; the taste for positive reality grows as doubts increase; the whole world ends up being an insoluble problem for the man who clings to the most tangible objects and who ends up lying down on his stomach against the earth out of fear that he, in turn, may come to miss the ground.

You cannot deny, however, that many sentiments there become purer. Thus love of country becomes more reasoned, more thoughtful, religion better understood by those who still believe in it, love of justice more enlightened, the general interest better understood, but all these sentiments lose in strength what they gain in perfection, they satisfy the mind more and act less on life.

I could undoubtedly push this portrait very much further, but I would write a volume. What I said is sufficient to make you feel that in my opinion you cannot say in an absolute manner: man improves by becoming civi-

lized, but rather that man by becoming civilized gains at the very same time virtues and vices that he did not have; he becomes something other, that is what is most clear.

Now, I am going further and I admit that, everything balanced and weighed, I prefer the second state to the first. Security, individual happiness seem to me all in all the principal end of societies. This end is incontestably attained by civilization and if it can take place without leading to too strong an attack on human morality, it is certain that it is desirable.

But it frequently happens that the intellectual education of a people is poorly done; then, it is not precisely the enlightenment that must be blamed, but the way in which it is given. For example, one nation in the world presents a singular spectacle. For reasons easy to find but very long to enumerate, the progressive spirit or civilization, instead of marching in agreement with religious beliefs or at least not clashing with them in its march, has entered into battle with them, so that an enlightened man there has not only become the synonym of a *doubting* man, not even the equivalent of an unbelieving man, but in most cases a true enemy of religion, of country. This is not all. Political passions become mixed in with them; a man has become irreligious by pride, by opinion. This nation, I do not need to tell you, is ours. Among us, not only has enlightenment produced its usual effect; this effect is tripled by the way in which this enlightenment has been spread; if the movement was continuous, and nothing declares that it is to stop soon, we would present the example of a great social body without beliefs, a unique example in the history of men, and about which consequently it is impossible to reason.

Do not believe, however, my dear friend, that I conclude from this that enlightenment must be fought and that we must struggle against the irresistible inclination of our century. No, in truth, I believe on the contrary that the only task that remains for the government is to seek to put itself at the head of the movement in order to direct it, to lavish instruction itself in order to be sure that instruction will not become a murderous weapon in other hands. I think, above all, that its efforts must tend toward disconnecting religion from politics, for what particularly harms the first is the proximity of the second. Thus in summary, you see, we will both act more

or less in the same way, you by enthusiasm and training, me by reasoning and calculations. You must notice, my dear Charles, that I have been going post-haste for a page and a half. In fact, I do not have time and must say farewell to you. I reproach myself for having philosophized in this way for an hour instead of chatting, which would have been much more valuable, but an honest man has only [interrupted text (ed.)]. (YTC, AVII)

APPENDIX 6

Foreword to the Twelfth Edition

However great and sudden the events that have just been accomplished in a moment before our eyes may be, the author of the present work has the right to say that he was not surprised by them. This book was written, fifteen years ago, with the constant preoccupation of a single thought: the impending, irresistible, universal advent of democracy in the world. May it be reread. You will find on each page a solemn warning that reminds men that society is changing form; humanity, changing condition; and that new destinies are approaching.

At the beginning these words were written:

The gradual development of equality of conditions is a providential fact; it has the principal characteristics of one: it is universal, it is lasting, it escapes every day from human power; all events, like all men, serve its development. Would it be wise to believe that a social movement that comes from so far could be suspended by the efforts of a generation? Do you think that after having destroyed feudalism and vanquished kings, democracy will retreat before the bourgeois and the rich? Will it stop now that it has become so strong and its adversaries so weak?

The man who, in the presence of a monarchy strengthened rather than weakened by the July Revolution, wrote these lines made prophetic by events, can again today call the attention of the public to his work without fear.

You must allow him as well to add that current circumstances give his book a timely interest and a practical utility that it did not have when it appeared for the first time.

Royalty existed then. Today it is destroyed. The institutions of America, which were only a subject of curiosity for monarchical France, must be a

subject of study for republican France. It is not force alone that establishes a new government; it is good laws. After the combatant, the legislator. The one has destroyed, the other establishes. Each has his work. If it is no longer a matter of knowing if we will have royalty or the Republic in France, it remains for us to learn if we will have an agitated or a tranquil Republic, a regular or an irregular Republic, a liberal or an oppressive Republic, a Republic that threatens the sacred rights of property and of family or a Republic that acknowledges and consecrates them. A terrible problem, whose solution is important not only to France, but to the whole civilized world. If we save ourselves, we save at the same time all the peoples who are around us. If we are lost, all of them are lost with us, Depending on whether we will have democratic liberty or democratic tyranny, the destiny of the world will be different, and you can say that today it depends on us whether the Republic ends up being established everywhere or abolished everywhere.

Now, this problem that we have only just posed, America resolved more than sixty years ago. For sixty years, the principle of sovereignty of the people that we enthroned yesterday among us, has reigned there undivided. It is put into practice there in the most direct, the most unlimited, the most absolute manner. For sixty years the people who have made it the common source of all their laws, have grown constantly in population, in territory, in wealth, and note it well, they have found themselves to have been, during this period, not only the most prosperous, but the most stable of all the peoples of the earth. While all the nations of Europe were ravaged by war or torn apart by civil discords, the American people alone in the civilized world remained at peace. Nearly all of Europe was turned upside down by revolutions; America did not even have riots; the Republic there was not disruptive, but conservative of all rights; individual property had more guarantees there than in any country in the world; anarchy remained as unknown as despotism.

Where else could we find greater hopes and greater lessons? Let us not turn our attention toward America in order to copy slavishly the institutions that it has given itself, but in order to understand better those that are suitable for us, less to draw examples from America than instruction, to borrow

the principles rather than the details of its laws. The laws of the French Republic can and must, in many cases, be different from those that govern the United States, but the principles on which the American constitutions rest, these principles of order, of balance of powers, of true liberty, of sincere and profound respect for law are indispensable to all Republics; they must be common to all, and you can say in advance that wherever they are not found, the Republic will soon cease to exist. 1848.

Ouvrages utilisés par Tocqueville

Cet appendice contient les ouvrages cités par Tocqueville dans son livre et ceux qui apparaissent dans ses notes et brouillons (nous les avons fait précéder de *). Dans les papiers de Tocqueville, on trouve deux bibliographies (YTC, CIIa et CIIb[a] qui, en plus de certaines références, permettent d'identifier les éditions qu'il a utilisées. Nous avons également repris les éditions du catalogue de la bibliothèque du château de Tocqueville (YTC, AIe) quand cela a été possible. Dans les autres cas, nous citons la première édition des ouvrages.

L'inclusion d'un ouvrage dans la liste n'indique pas nécessairement qu'il a servi au travail de rédaction. Tocqueville s'est parfois intéressé à des textes qu'il n'a pas pu obtenir à la Bibliothèque Royale ou il a pris note d'un livre qu'on lui recommandait et ne l'a jamais lu. Certains livres ont beaucoup marqué la *Démocratie,* tels le traité d'économie politique de Villeneuve-Bargemont ou le *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* de Rousseau. S'ils ne se trouvent pas mentionnés dans cette liste, c'est évidemment que Tocqueville ne les cite pas.

La bibliothèque du château conserve aussi un certain nombre de brochures, de discours et d'imprimés que l'auteur a reçus pendant son voyage en Amérique. Ces textes non découpés n'ont jamais été lus par Tocqueville.[b] La plus grande partie de ces ouvrages ne figurent pas dans cette liste. Nous citons néanmoins ceux qui ont assez intéressé Tocqueville pour que leur couverture porte des remarques et des annotations de sa main.

a. Les copies des bibliographies de Tocqueville contiennent de nombreuses erreurs. Nous avons omis de notre liste certains titres et auteurs inexistants. Ainsi on attribue à Castmare une histoire de New York alors qu'il s'agit de F. S. Eastman. Le *Fashionable Tour* devient le *Fashionable Tom,* l'ouvrage du juge Story est attribuée à "Hury," etc.

b. Certains Américains ont manifestement profité de la visite de Tocqueville et de Beaumont pour se débarrasser de livres qui ne les intéressaient pas (George W. Pierson,

Works Used by Tocqueville

This appendix contains the works cited by Tocqueville in his book and those that appear in his notes and drafts (I have preceded them with *). In Tocqueville's papers are found two bibliographies (YTC, CIIa and CIIb[a]) which, in addition to certain references, allow us to identify the editions that he used. I have as well gone back when possible to the editions of the catalogue of the library of the Tocqueville château (YTC, AIe). In other cases, I cite the first edition of the works.

The inclusion of a work in the list does not necessarily indicate that it was used in the work of writing. Tocqueville was sometimes interested in texts that he was not able to obtain from the Royal Library, or he took note of a book recommended to him and never read it. Certain books greatly influenced the Democracy, such as the treatise on political economy of Villeneuve-Bargement or Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité.* If they are not mentioned in this list, it is clearly because Tocqueville does not cite them.

The library of the château also preserves a certain number of brochures, speeches, and printed materials that the author received during his journey in America. These uncut texts were never read by Tocqueville.[b] Most of these works do not appear in this list. I nonetheless cite those that interested Tocqueville enough so that their covers bear marks and annotations in his hand.

a. The copies of the bibliographies of Tocqueville contain numerous errors. I have omitted from the list certain nonexistent titles and authors. Thus a history of New York is attributed to Castmare when it concerns F. S. Eastman. The *Fashionable Tour* becomes the *Fashionable Tom;* the work of Judge Story is attributed to "Hury," etc.

b. Certain Americans clearly profited from the visit of Tocqueville and Beaumont in order to get rid of books that did not interest them (George W. Pierson, *Tocqueville and*

* [A. C. T., "Mouvement de la presse française en 1836," *Revue des deux mondes,* 4e série, X, 1837, pp. 453–98.]

Abridged History of the United States. [Peut-être/*Maybe:* Hosea Hildreth, *An Abridged History of the United States of America.* Boston: Carter, Hendee and Babcock, 1831.]

An Account of the Church of Christ in Plymouth. [Dans/*In: Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society for the Year 1795.* Boston: Printed by Samuel Hall, 1795. IV, pp. 107–41.]

Adair, *History of the American Indians.* [James Adair, *The History of the American Indians . . .* London: Printed for Edward and Charles Dilly, 1775.]

* John Quincy Adams, *President Quincy's Centennial Address.* Boston, 1830.

* *Address of the Convention to the People of the United States.*

* *Allen Biographical Dictionary.* [William Allen, *An American Biographical and Historical Dictionary . . .* Cambridge (Massachusetts), 1809; Boston: William Hyde, 1832.]

* *Almanach royal, 1833.* [*Almanach royal et national pour l'an 1833 . . .* Paris: Guyot et Scribe, 1833.]

American Almanac. [*The American Almanac and Repository of Useful Knowledge.* Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1829–[61]. Tocqueville cite les volumes de/*Tocqueville cites the volumes of* 1831, 1832, 1833 et/*and* 1834.]

* *American Annual Register,* 1827–1835. [[Joseph Blunt,] *The American Annual Register.* New York: G. and C. Carvill, 1827. New York: E. and G. W. Blunt, 1828–1830.]

American Constitution. [L'édition du *Fédéraliste* employée par Tocqueville reproduit le texte de la Constitution américaine, mais Tocqueville cite une autre source/*The edition of the* Federalist *used by Tocqueville reproduces the text of the American constitution, but Tocqueville quotes another source.*]

* *American Medical and Philosophical Register.* [*American Medical and Philosophical Register, or Annals of Medicine, Natural History, Agriculture and the Arts,* conducted by a society of Gentlemen [David Hosack and Benjamin

Tocqueville and Beaumont in America, p. 537). Tocqueville a notamment reçu aux États-Unis: *On the Penetrativeness of Fluids,* by J. K. Mitchell (Philadelphia, 1830); *On the Storms at the American Coasts,* by W. C. Redfield; et *An Introductory Lecture on the Advantages and Pleasures of the Study of Chemistry in the Transylvania University,* by L. P. Yandell (Lexington, 1831), etc. Tocqueville ne semble pas avoir lu ces ouvrages et leur relation avec la *Démocratie en Amérique* paraît assez vague pour justifier leur absence dans cette bibliographie.

Rush entre autres/*among others*]. New York: C. S. Van Winkle, 1811–14. 4 vols.]

* *American Monthly Review.* [Peut-être celle publiée entre 1832 et 1834 par/*maybe the one published between 1832 and 1834 by* Hillard, Gray and Co., Boston. 4 vols.]
* *American Quarterly Review,* septembre 1831. [Tocqueville semble avoir été intéressé par le compte-rendu de/*Tocqueville seems to have been interested in the review of: Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829,* by the Rev. R. Walsh, London, 1830. 2 vols.]
* *The Anniversary Report of the Pennsylvania Society for Discouraging the Use of Ardent Spirits, 1831.* [Peut-être/*Maybe: The Anniversary Report of the Managers of the Pennsylvania Society for Discouraging the Use of Ardent Spirits, Read on the 27th May 1831.* Philadelphia: Henry H. Porter, 1831.]
* *Annual Law Register.* Voir/*See* Griffith.
* *Annual Report of the Apprentices' Library Company of Philadelphia* [Probablement/Probably: *Annual Report and the Treasurer's Account of the Apprentices' Library Company of Philadelphia.* March, 1831. "Modèle d'associations charitables," note Tocqueville/*"Model of charitable associations," notes Tocqueville.].
* *Annuaire Militaire de 1834.*
* Marquis d'Argenson. [*Considérations sur le Gouvernement de la France.* Amsterdam [Paris]: Chez Marc-Michel Rey, 1765.]
* Francis Bacon, *Nouvel organe.*
* Edward Baines. [*History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain.* London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher & P. Jackson, 1835.]
* [Odilon Barrot, "[Discours]," *Journal des débats,* 1 mars 1834.]
* Heliza Bates, *The Doctrine of Friends.* [Elisha Bates, *The Doctrines of Friends, or Principles of the Christian Religion as Held by the Society of Friends, Commonly Called Quakers.* Mountpleasant (Ohio): printed by the author, 1825.]
* Beccaria [*Traité des délits et des peines . . .* Philadelphia [Paris], 1766.].

Beaumont in America, p. 537). Tocqueville received, among others, in the United States: *On the Penetrativeness of Fluids,* by J. K. Mitchell (Philadelphia, 1830); *On the Storms at the American Coasts,* by W. C. Redfield; and *An Introductory Lecture on the Advantages and Pleasures of the Study of Chemistry in the Transylvania University,* by L. P. Yandell (Lexington, 1831), etc. Tocqueville seems not to have read these works and their connection with the *Democracy in America* seems sufficiently vague to justify their absence from this bibliography.

Jeremy Belknap, *History of New Hampshire,* Boston, Philadelphia: 1784–92. 3 vols.

Jeremy Belknap, ["Queries Respecting the Slavery and Emancipation of the Negroes in Massachusetts, Proposed by the Hon. Judge Tucker of Virginia, and Answered by the Rev. Dr. Belknap," dans/*in: Massachusetts Historical Collection,* IV, p. 191–211].

Bell, *Rapport sur les affaires indiennes, 24 février 1830.* [John Bell, *Removal of Indians. February 24, 1830,* [Documents of the House of Representatives, 21st Congress].]

Beverley, *History of Virginia from the Earliest Period.* Traduit en français en 1707/*Translated into French in 1707.* [Robert Beverley, *Histoire de la Virginie.* Paris: Pierre Ribou, 1707.]

Blackstone. [*Commentaries on the Laws of England.* Tocqueville le juge un écrivain médiocre, incapable d'un jugement profond/*Tocqueville considers him a mediocre writer, incapable of a profound judgment.*]

Blosseville, *Mémoires de Tanner.* [*Mémoires de John Tanner.* Traduit par Ernest de Blosseville/*Translated by Ernest de Blosseville.* Paris: A. Bertrand, 1835. 2 vols.]

* Joseph Blunt, *A Historical Sketch of the Formation of the Confederacy.* [*A Historical Sketch of the Formation of the Confederacy, Particularly with Reference to the Provincial Limits and the Jurisdiction of the General Government over Indian Tribes and the Public Territory.* New York: Geo. & Chas. Carvill, 1825. "Curieux pour connaître les principes du gouvernement fédéral de l'Union"/*"Interesting for knowing the principles of the federal government of the Union."*]

* Blunt, Joseph. Voir/*See: American Annual Register.*

* Boissy d'Anglas, François Antoine comte de, *Essai sur la vie, les écrits et les opinions de M. de Malesherbes.* Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1819–21. 2 vols.

* Bossuet, *Discours sur l'histoire universelle, depuis le commencement du monde jusqu'à l'empire de Charlemagne, avec la suite jusqu'à l'année 1700,* 1756. [Nous n'avons pas trouvé l'édition de 1756 mentionnée dans le catalogue de la bibliothèque du château de Tocqueville. Il s'agit peut-être de l'édition de Babuty fils, Paris, 1765. 2 vols./*I have not found the edition of 1756 mentioned in the catalogue of the library of the Tocqueville château. Perhaps it is the edition of Babuty fils,* Paris, 1765. 2 vols.]

* Bossuet, *Histoire des variations des églises protestantes.* Paris: G. Desprez et J. Dessesartz, 1730. 4 vols.

[Boston] *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Receipts and Expenses of the City of Boston and County of Suffolk. 1 May 1831.*

Brevard's Digest of the Public Statute Law of South Carolina. [Joseph Brevard, *An Alphabetical Digest of the Public Statute Law of South Carolina.* Charleston (South Carolina): John Hoff, 1814.]

* Buffon, *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière.* Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1769–1781. 13 vols.

* Buffon, *Histoire naturelle des oiseaux.* Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1770–83. 9 vols.

* *Burke* (mot illisible) *Register.* [*The Annual Register of World Events; A Review of the Year.* London, New York: Longmans, Green, 1758–1963. Edité par E. Burke jusqu'à 1791/*Edited by E. Burke until 1791.*]

Lord Byron, *Childe Harold.*

* Lord Byron, [*Correspondance de lord Byron avec un ami . . .* Paris: A. and W. Calignani, 1825. 2 vols].

* Candolle. [Tocqueville mentionne un ouvrage de Candolle sur l'or et l'argent. Il s'agit peut-être de/*Tocqueville mentions a work by Candolle on gold and money. Perhaps it is* Alphonse de Candolle, *Les caisses d'épargne de la Suisse considérées en elles-mêmes et comparées avec celles d'autres pays . . .* Genève: A. Cherbuliez et Cie., 1838.]

Carey, *Letters on the Colonization Society.* Philadelphia, 1833. [Mathew Carey, *Letters on the Colonization Society . . .* 7e édition. Philadelphia: Sterotyped by L. Johnson, 1833.]

Caroline du Sud. *Rapport fait à la convocation de la Caroline du Sud. Ordonnance de nullification du 24 novembre 1832.* [Il y a plusieurs éditions de ce document. Tocqueville aurait pu consulter/*There are several editions of this document. Tocqueville could have consulted: The Report, Ordinance, and Addresses of the Convention of the People of South Carolina. Adopted, November 24th, 1832.* Columbia (South Carolina): A. S. Johnston, 1832.]

Cass. Voir/*see* Clark.

Chalmer. [Probablement/*probably,* Lionel Chalmers, *An Account of the Weather and Diseases of South Carolina.* London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1776. 2 vols.]

* "[Chambre des députés, discussion sur la loi de compétences départamentales/*Chamber of Deputies, discussion of the law on departmental jurisdiction*]," *Journal des débats,* 7 mars 1838.

* William Ellery Channing, *Discourses, Reviews and Miscellaneous.* 1 vol. [William Ellery Channing, *Discourses, Reviews and Miscellanies.* Boston: Carter, Hender and Co., 1830. 2 vols.]

Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France.* [Pierre-François Charlevoix, *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France . . .* Paris: Chez Nyon Fils, 1744.]

Chateaubriand, *René.*

* Chateaubriand, [*Essai sur la littérature anglaise.* Paris: Charles Gosselin et Furne, 1836. 2 vols].

Clark et Cass. Rapports du 4 février 1829, 29 novembre 1823 et 19 novembre 1829/*Reports of 4 February 1829, 29 November 1823 and 19 November 1829.*

* De Witt Clinton, *Memoirs of De Witt Clinton* [New York: J. Seymour, 1829]. Voir/*See* David Hossak.

Code of 1650. Hartford, 1830. [*The Code of 1650 . . .* Hartford (Connecticut): S. Andrus, 1830.]

* [Auguste Colin, "Lettres sur l'Egypte—Administration territoriale du Pacha," *Revue des deux mondes,* XIII, 1838, pp. 655–71.]

Companion to the Almanac for 1830. [*Companion to the Almanac; or Year-Book of General Information.* London: Stationers' Co., 1830.]

Compte général de l'Administration des Finances, [Paris, 1808– . Le titre change à l'occasion/*The title changes on occasion*].

Connecticut. *Constitution de 1638.* [Les citations de Tocqueville appartiennent au *Code of 1650,* qui reproduit la Constitution de 1638 aux pages 11–19/*Tocqueville's quotations are from the* Code of 1650, *which reproduces the constitution of 1638 on pages 11–19.*]

John Cook. [Voir/*See* Look]

* [James Fenimore Cooper, *Excursion in Switzerland.* Paris: A. and W. Calignani and Co., 1836; et/*and* Baudry, 1836.]

* [James Fenimore Cooper, *Letter of J. Fenimore Cooper to Gen. Lafayette, on the Expenditure of the United States of America.* Paris: Baudry, 1831.]

* [James Fenimore Cooper, *Notions of the Americans; Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor.* London: Henry Colburn, 1828. 2 vols. Dans ses notes, Tocqueville cite l'édition anglaise, mais il a acheté avant son départ la version française publiée sous le titre/*In his notes, Tocqueville cites the English edition, but before his departure he bought the French version published with the title: Lettres sur les mœurs et les institutions des États-Unis de l'Amérique du Nord.* Paris: A. J. Kilian, 1828. 4 vols en 2.]

Darby's View of the United States. [William Darby, *View of the United States, Historical, Geographical, and Statistical . . .* Philadelphia: H. S. Tanner, 1828. "Cet ouvrage est estimé mais déjà ancien, il date de 1828."/*"This work is respected but already old; it dates from 1828."*]

* *A Practical Treatise of the Peace in Criminal Jurisdiction,* by Davis. [Daniel Davis, *A Practical Treatise upon the Authority and Duty of Justices of the Peace in Criminal Prosecutions.* Boston: Cummings, Hilliard, 1824. Tocqueville jugeait curieux pour la procédure civile ce texte estimé/ *Tocqueville considered this respected text interesting for civil procedure.*]

Delolme [voir/*see* de Lolme].

Descouritz. [Michel Etienne Descourtilz, *Voyages d'un naturaliste et ses observations . . .* Paris: Dufart Père, 1809. 3 vols.]

Documents législatifs. [Voir *U.S. Congress. Legislative documents.*]

* Douglas, *Histoire générale des colonies. Douglas' Summary, 1775.* [William Douglass, *A Summary, Historical and Political of the First Planting, Progressive Improvements, and Present State of the British Settlements in North America.* London: R. Baldwin, 1755. 2 vols. Nous n'avons pas pu trouver l'édition de 1775/*I have not been able to find the edition of 1775.*]

* William Alexander Duer, *Outlines of the Constitutional Jurisprudence of the United States.* [New York: Collins and Hanny, 1833.]

* Dufresne de St. Léon, *Étude du crédit public.* [Dufresne de Saint-Léon, Louis-César-Alexandre, *Étude du crédit public et des dettes publiques.* Paris: Bossangue Père, 1824.]

Duponceau, *Correspondance avec le Rvd. Heckewelder.* [Voir/*See* Heckewelder]

* Durand, de Dauphiné, *Voyages d'un François, exilé pour la religion, avec une description de la Virginie & Marilan dans l'Amérique.* [La Haye, [imprimé par l'auteur], 1696.]

* F. S. Eastman, *History of the State of New-York.* [New York: E. Bliss, 1828.]

* Elliot's Pocket Almanac of the Federal Government. 1832. [*Elliot's Washington Pocket Almanac.* Washington: S. A. Eliot [*sic*]. "Assez curieux comme présentant le tableau des rouages administratifs du gouvernement central."/ *"Quite interesting for presenting the picture of the administrative machinery of the central government."*]

Emerson's Medical Statistics. [Gouverneur Emerson, *Medical Statistics, Consisting of Estimates Relating to the Population of Philadelphia, with its Changes as Influenced by the Deaths and Births, During Ten Years, viz. from 1821 to 1830, Inclusive.* Philadelphia: Joseph R. A. Kenett, 1831. 32 pp.]

Encyclopedia americana. [Reçue de Francis Lieber/*Received from Francis Lieber.*]

* *Encyclopédie*

Les Évangiles.

Everett. [Edward Everett, *Speech of Mr. Everett, of Massachusetts, on the Bill for*

Removing the Indians from the East to the West Side of the Mississippi, Delivered . . . 19th of May, 1830: Boston, 1830.]

* *Extracts from the Ancient Roads [Records] of New Haven.* [Fait partie du *Code of 1650/Part of the* Code of 1650.]

* *Extrait du bulletin de la Société de géographie. Tableau de la population des États-Unis d'après les différents recensements exécutés par ordre du gouvernement.*

* *The Fashionable Tour.* [[Gideon Miner Davidson,] *The Fashionable Tour. A Guide to Travellers Visiting the Middle and Northern States and the Province of Canada.* 4e édition. Saratoga Springs and NewYork, 1830.]

Le Fédéraliste. [*The Federalist.* Washington: Thomson & Homans, 1831. (Édition identifiée par James T. Schleifer/*Edition identified by James T. Schleifer*). Au début de 1835, Tocqueville a également employée l'édition française de Buisson . . . , Paris, 1792. 2 vols./*(Edition identified by James T. Schleifer.) At the beginning of 1835, Tocqueville also used the French edition of Buisson . . . , Paris, 1792. 2 vols.*]

* Fisher, *Pauperism and Crime.* 1831 [W. L. Fisher, *Pauperism and Crime.* Philadelphia: The Author, 1831].

Fischer, *Conjectures sur l'origine des Américains.* [Jean-Eberhard Fischer, *De l'origine des Américains.* Saint-Petersburg, 1771.]

Peter Force, *The National Calendar, and Annals of the United States, for 1833.* Washington: Printed and Published by Peter Force, [1833].

* Franklin, *An Historical Review of the Constitutions of Pennsylvania.* 1759. [Benjamin Franklin, *An Historical Review of the Constitutions of Pennsylvania . . .* London: R. Griffiths, 1759.]

* Gallatin, *Considerations of the Currency and Banking System of the United States.* [Albert Gallatin, *Considerations on the Currency and Banking System of the United States.* Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1831.]

* Gallatin. Voir/*See: *Memorial of the Committee of the Free Trade Convention Held in Philadelphia, October 1831.*

Geisberg. Voir/*See:* Zeisberger.

Isaac Godwin, *The Town Officer.* [Isaac Goodwin, *Town Officer; or Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Duties of Municipal Officer . . .* Worcester (Massachusetts): Dorr and Howland, 1829.]

* Daniel Gookin, *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England.* 1792. [Dans/*In Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society. For the Year 1792.* Boston, 1792. I, pp. 141–226.]

* Miss Grant, *The American Lady.* [[Anne Grant,] *Memoirs of an American*

Lady. London: Longman, 1808, et nombreuses rééditions/*and many reprints*.]

* William Griffith, *Annual Law Register of the United States.* [Burlington (New Jersey): David Allinson, 1822.]

* [Friedrich M. Grimm, *Nouveaux mémoires secrets et inédits historiques, politiques, anecdotiques et littéraires . . .* Paris: Lerouge-Wolf, 1834. 2 vols.]

* [François Guizot, "De la religion dans les sociétés modernes," *L'Université catholique,* 5 (27), mars 1838, pp. 231–40.]

* [François Guizot, *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*.]

Ebenezer Hazard, *Historical Collection of State Papers and Other Authentic Documents Intended as Materials for an History of the United States of America.* Philadelphia, 1792. [Philadelphia: Printed by T. Dobson for the author, 1792–94.]

* John Heckewelder, *Historical Account of the Indian Nature.* 1 vol. ["An Account of the History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society . . .* Philadelphia: A. Small, 1819–43. I, pp. 3–347.]

John Heckewelder, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Review.* [American Philosophical Society, *Transactions of the Historical and Literary Committee of the American Philosophical Society . . .* Philadelphia: A. Small, 1819–43. 3 vols. Le volume I, pages 351–448, contient/*Volume I, pages 351–448, includes*: "Correspondence between Mr. Heckewelder and Mr. Duponceau, on the Languages of the American Indians." "Très curieux sur les langues indiennes, les mœurs et l'histoire des Indiens."/*"Very interesting on the Indian languages, the mores and the history of the Indians."*]

* Père Hennepin, *Nouveau voyage dans la Mer du Sud et du Nord.* Utrecht, 1698. [Il semble que Tocqueville n'ait pas lu cet ouvrage/*It seems that Tocqueville did not read this work.*]

* Hinton, *History US.* [John Howard Hinton ed., *The History and Topography of the United States.* Jennings & Chaplin & J. T. Hinton, 1830–33. 2 vols.]

* David Hosack, *Essays on various Subjects of Medical Science.* 3 vols. [New York: J. Seymour, 1824–30. 3 vols.]

* David Hosack, *Memoirs of De Witt Clinton* [New York: J. Seymour, 1829.]

* David Hosack. Voir/*See American Medical and Philosophical Register.*

* John Howard, *Memoirs of John Howard.* [Probablement/*probably* Thomas Taylor, *Memoirs of John Howard.* London: John Hatchard and Son, 1836.]

Hutchinson, *Histoire.* [Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay . . .* 2e édition/*second edition.* London: Mr. Richardson, 1765.]

Jefferson, *Correspondance de Jefferson par Conseil.* [Louis Conseil, *Mélanges politiques et philosophiques extraits des mémoires et de la correspondance de Thomas Jefferson . . .* Paris: Paulin, 1833.]

Jefferson, *Lettres à Madison.* [Dans l'édition de Conseil/*In Conseil's edition.*]

Jefferson, *Mémoires.* [Fragments de l'édition de Conseil/*Fragments from Conseil's edition.*]

Jefferson, *Notes sur la Virginie.* [Thomas Jefferson, *Observations sur la Virginie.* Traduites par l'abbé Morellet/*Translated by the Abbé Morellet.* Paris: Barrois, l'aîné, 1786.]

* Johnson, *Wonder-working Providence of Sions Saviour in New England.* London. ["Wonder-working Providence of Sions Saviour. Being a Relation of the First Planting in New England, in the Yeere, 1628," dans/*in: Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society,* II, pp. 51–95; III, pp. 123–61; IV, pp. 1–51; VII, pp. 1–58; VIII, pp. 1–39.]

* *Journal des débats,* 1 mars 1834. Voir/*See* Odilon Barrot.

* *Journal des débats,* 22 janvier 1836. [Sur la Pennsylvanie et ses communication, spécialement les chemins de fer/*On Pennsylvania and its communication networks, especially the railroads.*]

* *Journal des débats,* 27 janvier 1836. [Sur la banque américaine et sa réaction après l'incendie de New York/*On the American bank and its reaction after the New York conflagration.*]

* *Journal des débats,* 7 mars 1838. Voir/*See* "Chambre des députés."

* Kempis, *Imitation de Jésus-Christ.*

Kent's Commentaries. [James Kent, *Commentaries on American Law.* New York: O. Halsted, 1826. 4 vols.]

* La Bruyère. [*Les caractères de Théophraste et de La Bruyère avec des notes par Mr. Coste.* Paris: L. Prault, 1769. 2 vols.]

Lafayette, *Mémoires.* [Marquis de Lafayette, *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits du général Lafayette.* Paris: H. Fournier aîné, 1837–38. 6 vols. Nous avons fait remarquer que la citation des mémoires pourrait provenir de l'article de Sainte-Beuve/*I have noted that the quotation from the memoirs could have come from the article by Sainte-Beuve,* "Mémoires de Lafayette," *Revue des deux mondes,* 4e série, 15, 1838, pp. 355–81.]

* Lafayette. [*Le général Lafayette à ses collègues de la Chambre des députés.* Paris: Paulin, 1832.]

* La Hontan. [*Voyages du Baron de La Hontan dans l'Amérique septentrionale.* Amsterdam: F. l'Honoré, 1705.]

* La Hontan. [*Nouveaux voyages de Mr. le baron de la Hontan en Amérique septentrionale.* La Haye: F. l'Honoré, 1703.]

* La Luzerne, César-Henri comte de, *Correspondence of C. A. de La Luzerne,* dans/*in* Jared Sparks, *The Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution.* Boston 1830. Vols. X et XI. Identifié par/*Identified by* George W. Pierson.

Lamartine, *Jocelyn.*

* La Rochefoucault Liancourt, *Voyage dans les États-Unis.* [*Voyage dans les États-Unis d'Amérique, fait en 1795, 1796 et 1797.* Paris: Du Pont, Buisson, Charles Pougens, [1799]. 8 vols.]

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Index

abbreviations, xxxix–xli
Abelard, 718*n*m
abolition, cix*n*192, 548*n*c, 552, 553–54*n*o, 555–56, 561–62*n*t, 564, 565*n*40; in Connecticut, 553–54*n*o; in Delaware, 553–54*n*o; in Illinois, 553–54*n*o; in Indiana, 553–54*n*o; in Massachusetts, 553–54*n*o; mortality, 565*n*41; in New York, 553–54*n*o, 564; in the North, 564–65, 568–71, 574; in Ohio, 553–54*n*o, 558–61; in Pennsylvania, 553–54*n*o; in the South, 569–72. *See also* emancipation; slavery
absolute good, 1095–96*n*e
absolute monarchy, 228, 514, 632, 894*n*q, 1081–82, 1128; arbitrariness of magistrates under, 327–30; democracy and, 948–50*n*c; independence of thought in, 417; political jurisdiction and, 179–80; public expenditures of, 333. *See also* despotism; monarchy; tyranny
absolute power, democracy and, 511*n*f
absolute truth, cxxi–cxxiv, cxxii*n*240, 3*n*a, 716*n*h
acacia, 659*n*(B)
Académie des sciences morales et politiques, xxxvi–xxxvii*n*20, lxxviii, xcii, cii*n*171
Académie française, cii*n*171
action, cxxv, cxxvi, 739*n*c; philosophy of, cxx–cxxxii
Acts of the State of Ohio, 131*n*38, 685–96*n*(C), 686
Adams, H. B., 99–100*n*c
Adams, John Quincy, 53*n*m, 214–15*n*k, 215–17*n*m, 563*n*u, 621–22*n*v
Addison, 848*n*c
administration, lxxxi, xcvii; French, 99–100*n*c; general ideas on, 129–35; judicial penalties as a means of, 122; in New England, 115–29; in the United States, 98–114, 129–35. *See also* administrative centralization; public administration
administrative centralization, cxxv*n*249, 143–48, 144*n*e, 144*n*f, 1226–27*n*k; absence of, 427–29, 428–29*n*d; in Canada, 650*n*d; democracies and, 163–64*n*e; despotism and, 147, 148–49; in England, 146; in France, 144*n*g, 148, 148*n*[*], 165, 650*n*d; lack of in England, 146; lack of in New England, 120; in Massachusetts, 135*n*32; in New York, 134–35; in the United States, 134–35, 149–50. *See also* administrative decentralization; centralization
administrative crimes, 127–28, 128*n*[*], 129, 133
administrative decentralization: effects of in the United States, 152–56; judicial power and, 175*n*j; political effects of, 142–66. *See also* administrative centralization; decentralization

administrative dependence, 1259–60*n*w, 1259–61
administrative despotism, 1204*n*f, 1234–40, 1235–37*n*y, 1245–61, 1245*n*a, 1249*n*e, 1252*n*n, 1260*n*x; in Europe, 1255–56*n*q; lack of in the United States, 1259*n*v; sovereignty of the people and, 1255–56, 1255–56*n*q. *See also* despotism
administrative hierarchy, 127, 133–34
administrative instability, 331–32, 407–9
administrative officials. *See* public officials
administrative power, 120*n*g, 1204*n*f, 1214, 1228–29*n*o, 1230–31*n*p, 1235–37*n*y; decentralization of, 118; division of, 137*n*y; in Europe, 1228–30; in France, 1228–29*n*o, 1231*n*4; liberty and, 1228–29*n*o; in Massachusetts, 118–19; in the United States, 118–29
administrative science, 331–32, 332*n*d, 1228–29*n*o. *See also* political science
Aesop, 550*n*31, 550*n*e
Africa: armies in, 1156–57*n*d; return of Blacks to, 576–77, 576*n*d, 576*n*48, 576*n*49, 577*n*50
the afterlife, 965–66, 965*n*a. *See also* the soul, immortality of
agitation, xxvi, 1089–92, 1089*n*a. *See also* restlessness
agrarian law, theory of, 1136*n*e
agriculture, 972, 973, 977; cereal crops, 567; cotton plantations, 566–67, 595; in the South, 977; sugar cane plantations, 559*n*38, 566–67, 595; tobacco plantations, 562*n*39, 566–67, 566–68*n*w, 595, 611*n*78; in the West, 977
Alabama, 521, 533*n*14, 541*n*21, 620–24, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
alcohol, 365, 901–2, 1306–8
Alexander, 733*n*h, 851, 1182*n*e
Algeria, 102*n*e, 145–46*n*g, 536*n*u, 747*n*e
Allegheny Mountains, 34, 36–37, 594–95, 594*n*56, 595*n*58, 597, 606, 608
Allison, John M. S., xxxi
ambition, 930–31*n*b, 1116–18*nn*a–f, 1116–28, 1131*n*e, 1187–89*n*a; aristocracy and, 1123–24, 1123*n*n; in China, 1123; democracy and, 1116–18*nn*a–f, 1116–28, 1121*n*j, 1123*n*n, 1126*n*r, 1129*n*a, 1131*n*e; democratic revolution and, 1119; depraved, 1119–20*n*h; equality and, 1116–17*n*b, 1118*n*f, 1120; France and, 1116–17*n*b; industrial, 1129–32, 1131*n*e; monarchy and, 1116–17*n*b; revolution and, 1116*n*a, 1118, 1118*n*f, 1119–20. *See also* positions
America: conquest of, 536*n*u; discovery of, 7*n*h; English colonies in, 37; forest in, 1308*n*d; history of, 666–74*n*(F). *See also* the New World; the United States
American Almanac, 608*n*d, 638*n*g
American Indians. *See* Indians
American Institutions and Mores, lxxxviii
American literature, 800–812, 800*n*a, 802–3*n*d, 803*n*e, 804*n*h
Americanness, 689–90*n*a
the American Revolution, 84, 117, 188–89, 190, 275*n*41, 282, 283, 360–61, 360*n*15, 421, 533*n*16, 652; democracy and, 85–86*n*e; enthusiasm for, 360–61; the South and, 78; sovereignty of the people and, 92–93
Americans: ability to learn from experience, 364–66; acquisition of wealth and, 766–68, 767–68*n*f; anxiety of, 1085–88, 1085*n*a; the arts and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 784*n*n, 788–95; Cartesian method and, 697–

98*n*a; character of, lxxxiii, 29, 420–23; commercial interests of, 784*n*n; compared with the French, 737–41; creation of new words by, 822; domestic happiness of, 473–74, 474*n*j, 819–21*n*d; the English and, 646; enlightenment of, 488–94; equality and, 455, 759–62; in Europe, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a; fear of, 612; focus on material enjoyments, 765–66*n*e; general ideas and, 698–99a, 726–32*nn*a–g, 726–41, 739*n*c; gravity of, 1080–81*nn*a–b, 1080–84, 1081*n*d; habit of inattention among, 1083–84; habits of, 488–94, 1005–6, 1005*n*a, 1083–84; habitual relations of, 995–99, 995*nn*a–b, 998–99*n*e; Indians and, 539–40*n*19, 542–47; influence of democracy on sentiments of, 871–985, 871*n*a; intelligence of, 642–43, 642–43*n*m; knowledge of, 490–91, 490*n*z; liberty and, 948–53, 948*n*a; literature and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 784*n*n, 800–812, 800*n*a, 802–3*n*d, 803*n*e, 804*n*h, 805; marriages of, 473–74, 474*n*j; material enjoyments and, 767, 943*nn*c–d, 948–53, 948*n*a; material interests of, 784*n*n; materialism of, 943*nn*c–d; melancholy among, 1082, 1082*n*e; monuments and, 796–99, 796–99*nn*c–e, 796*n*a; mores of, 1005–6, 1005*n*a; natural environment and, 835–37; nature and, 835–37; originality and, 1091–92*n*d; origin of, 455; patriotism of, 1100*n*j; perfectibility of man and, 759–62; philosophical method and, 697–98*n*a, 697–710, 698–99a, 776, 1014–15*n*m; philosophy and, 697–710, 739*n*c, 784*n*n; political theory and, 737–41, 737*n*a; politics and, 737–41; practical experience of, 488–94; pride of, 600–601, 600*n*d, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1002*n*c; public affairs and, 948–53, 948*n*a; Puritanism of, 1081*n*d; quarrelsomeness of, 1085–88, 1085*n*a; relationships of, 995–99, 995*nn*a–b; religion and, 697–98*n*a, 769, 954–62, 954*nn*a–b; restlessness of, 613, 643–44, 942–47, 942*n*a, 1083; revolution and, 1140–41, 1140*n*j; satisfaction with political institutions, 1290–91; science and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 775–77*nn*a–c, 775–87, 784*n*n; sociability of, 995–99, 995*n*b, 998–99*n*e; social state of, 690–91, 690–91*n*c, 697–98*n*a; spiritualism of, 939–41, 939*nn*a–c, 939*nn*a–b, 941*n*f, 941*n*h, 954–62, 954*n*a; susceptibility of, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1005–6, 1005*n*a; temperament of, 1080–84, 1085–88, 1085*n*a, 1089–92, 1089*n*a; thoughtlessness of, 1083–84; vanity of, 1085–88, 1085*n*a, 1086*n*d; wealth and, 1090*n*c, 1091; wilderness and, 655–56, 835–37 (*see also* the frontier; pioneers; settlers). *See also* Anglo-Americans

Ampère, Jean Jacques, xciii, ci, ciii, cvii*n*185, cxvi*n*217, 699*n*d, 715*n*g, 757*n*b, 893*n*n, 893*n*p, 1012–13*n*k, 1062*n*b, 1066*n*j, 1133*n*c

Amphictyons, 253*n*36

Anabaptists, 63*n*25

anarchy, cxxxii, cxliii, 116, 117, 122, 424, 425, 877–88*n*e, 1191–92*n*b, 1276, 1293–94*n*; democracy and, 1191–92, 1191–92*n*b, 1247*n*d; despotism and, 1250–51*n*j; intellectual, 1144; revolutions and, 1250–51*n*j

ancestry, 881*n*a, 882*n*a, 883, 884. *See also* families

Anglican Church, 819–21*n*d
Anglo-Americans, 632; advance of, 650–51; arrival in the New World, 766–67; Blacks and, 548–82, 572–73; bonds unifying, 654–55; Christianity and, 707, 709–10*n*u; democracy and, 75–88; English influence on, 71; enlightenment of, 490; expansion throughout North America, 649–57; faith and, 705–7*n*r; future of, 45–73, 649–57; habits of, 692, 705–7; Indians and, 522–47, 539–40*n*19, 540*n*20; instinct of, 692; laws of, 62–65, 67, 69, 71–73, 690; maritime genius of, 638–41, 640*n*h, 644, 644*n*95; moral authority and, 600, 600*n*60; mores of, 690; in the North, 51; opinions of, 691, 692; oppression of Indians by, 541–47, 542*n*x; origin of, 45–73, 455, 692; philosophy and, 705–7*n*r, 707–8*n*s; preponderance of in the New World, 649–57; pride of, 600–601, 600*n*d; Puritan influence on, 71; religion and, 692, 705–7, 705–7*n*r; sentiments of, 691, 692, 705–7; social state of, 74–90, 75*n*d; in the South, 51; universal reason and, 600, 600*n*60. *See also* Americans; English colonies
Antilles, 37–38, 495, 553–54*n*o, 572*n*47, 574–75, 574*n*c, 659*n*(B)
anti-positivism, cxxi
antiquity, 510; aristocracy in, 733*n*h, 816; Classics, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17; democracy in, 795*n*k, 1082, 1143*n*p; equality in, 732–33, 733*n*h; principle of representation in, 337*n*p; slavery in, 732–33, 733*n*h. *See also specific civilizations*
anti-rationality, cxxiv
Antoine, Agnès, 743*n*2
Antwerp, Belgium, 1156–57*nn*d
apathy, cxxvi, cxxxiii, cxl, cxli, 1150–51, 1150*n*x, 1250–51*n*j, 1293–94*n*
Appenzell, Switzerland, 590–91*t*
aqueducts, 798
Arabs, 536*n*u, 839*n*t
arbitrariness, distinguished from tyranny, 415–16, 415–16*n*x
Archimedes, 782–83
Arctic pole, 33
Argenson, René-Louis, *Considérations sur le gouvernement ancien et présent de la France,* 1161–62*n*j
aristocracy, cvi, cxx, cxx*n*228, cxxviii–cxxix, cxxxii, cxxxix*n*258, cxliii*n*308, cxliv, cxliv*n*311, cxlv*n*312, cxlv*n*315, cxlvi*n*317, cxlvii, 8, 19–20, 21, 23*n*f, 162, 163–64*n*e, 300, 300*n*p, 322–23*n*o, 322*n*o, 406, 508, 628–29*n*z, 630–31*n*b, 691, 694–95*n*m, 709–10*n*u, 883, 883*n*e, 888*n*d, 907, 1060*n*j, 1136*n*f, 1187–89*n*a, 1195, 1211, 1215*n*p, 1223*n*d, 1244, 1263, 1268*n*n, 1282, 1282*n*g; ambition and, 1123–24, 1123*n*n; in America, lxxxi, 77–78, 87–88, 735*n*m; in antiquity, 733*n*h, 816; armies and, 1154–56, 1155–56*n*c, 1166, 1173–75, 1173*n*d; art and, 788*n*a, 789–92, 794, 810*n*q; association and, 895*n*a, 898–99, 898–99*n*h, 898*n*g, 903–4; based on wealth, 975*n*f; of birth, 975*n*f, 1286–87*n*; Catholicism and, 470; centralization and, 1203*n*d, 1219; civil associations and, 898–99*n*h; class and, 1068–70, 1068*n*a, 1068*nn*a–b, 1069–70, 1069*n*c; class interests and, 380–84, 381; commerce and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 1286–87*n*; compared to Jews, 1263–64*n*c; connection to others and, 883, 883*n*e, 884, 888*n*e, 890,

890*n*g; contested, 885*n*b; corruption in, 356–59; decline of, 22–23; democracy and, lxxxiv, 810*n*q, 1268*n*o, 1286–87*n*; doctrine of interest well understood and, 920, 920*n*g; English, xciv, xcvi–xcvii*n*157, xcvii, 82*n*v, 165, 382–83, 434, 445, 735*n*m, 786–87*n*p, 978–79*n*j, 1212, 1212*n*j, 1251*n*k, 1286*n*; enlightenment and, 727–28*n*b, 1214; in Europe, 1221–22, 1222–23*n*1, 1232–33; the family and, 1031*n*a, 1032, 1033–35*n*e, 1035–40, 1037*n*j; feudalism and, 1101*n*k; focus on maintaining rather than improving society, 337–38, 338*n*r; foreign affairs and, 370–71, 372; founded solely on money, 973*n*c; freedom of the press in, 1269; French, xcvii, 7–10, 10–12*n*q, 1060–61; general ideas and, 726*n*a, 736; government and, 1265–66*n*g, 1265–11266*n*g, 1266–67; granting of nobility, 8; habitual relations and, 995–99, 995*n*ab, 998–99*n*e; historiography and, 853, 853*n*a, 854, 855, 855*n*f, 856, 857; honor and, 1093*n*a, 1096–1102, 1097–98*n*h, 1106–10, 1110–13*n*v, 1170–71*n*b, 1174–75; ideas and, cxx, 900–901; industry and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 978–79*n*j, 980–81*nn*a–b, 980–85, 1026, 1028–29*n*g, 1028*n*f, 1286–87*n*; as inevitable moment of history, cxix; inheritance laws and, 78–85; of Ireland, 82*n*v; jurists and, 433–37, 439, 439*n*r; lack of gravity in, 1080; landed property and, 78–79*n*o; language and, 822, 825–26, 828*n*m; laws of, 378–79*n*e; leases and, 1020*n*a, 1021*n*b, 1023*n*d; legislatures and, 861*n*a, 862–64; liberty and, 307*n*h, 885*n*b, 1212, 1263–64, 1263–64*n*c; literature and, 800*n*a, 805–6, 807, 807*n*1, 809*n*o, 810, 810*n*p, 810*n*q, 813, 814*n*e, 815; love in, 1058*n*g; magistrates in, 381–82; manners and, 1000–1001, 1000*n*a, 1074–75*n*f, 1076–79, 1079*n*m; manufacturing, lxix, 81*n*s; marriage and, 1055, 1056–57; material enjoyments and, 935*n*a, 936, 936*n*c; material well-being and, 930–31*n*b, 930*n*a, 931, 932–33*n*d, 934ng, 935–36*nn*a–b, 936–37, 937*n*d; military, 1253–54*n*o; of money, 975*n*f, 978–79*n*j, 1286–87*n,* 1286*n*a; mores and, 989–92, 1053*n*b, 1054, 1054*n*c, 1059–61; in the New World, 495; originality and, 1091–92*n*d; parliamentary eloquence and, 862–64, 868–69, 868*n*e, 868*n*f; perfectibility of man and, 759*n*b, 760, 762; poetry and, 832–35, 833*n*g, 838; property and, 1266*n*h; public expenses and, 337–38; public institutions and, 796–97*n*b; rejection of in the New World, 50–51; revolution and, 1136*n*f, 1141–42*n*m, 1142–43*n*m, 1148; salaries and, 1028–29*n*g; science and, 782–83, 786–87*n*p, 810*n*q; sentiments and, 900–901; servant/master relationships in, 1007–8*nn*a–b, 1007–13, 1009*n*1, 1011*n*h, 1012*n*k, 1014–15*n*m, 1016, 1018, 1019*n*o; social power and, 1274; in the South, 77–78, 563–64, 563*n*u, 602–3; sovereigns and, 1221–22; sovereignty and, 1266–67; sympathy and, 989–90*n*f, 991–92; temperament and, 1089; theater and, 846–47, 848; in the United States, 635–37; unsalaried public officials and, 325–26; useful arts and, 789–90*n*d; vanity and,

aristocracy (*continued*)
1086–88, 1086*n*e; vices in, 356–59; violence in, 418–19; virtue and, 919, 922*n*k; war and, 1178–80*n*1, 1182–83, 1182*n*e, 1187–89*n*a; wealth and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 1090; work and, 970. *See also* nobility
aristocratic party, remnants of the, 287–88
Aristotle, 709–10*n*u, 733*n*h, 795*n*k; *Politics,* 78–79*n*o
Arius, 822–23*n*f
Arkansas, 542*n*23, 543–44, 613*n*79
Armagnac faction, 7*n*h
armies, lxxxi, cii, 151*n*[*], 453, 1164*n*n, 1187–89*n*a, 1291–92*n*; in Africa, 1156–57*nn*d; aristocratic, 1154–56, 1155–56*n*c, 1166, 1173–75, 1173*n*d; class differences within, 1165–69, 1165*n*a; compulsory enlistment, 1165–66; democratic, 1153–64, 1153*n*a, 1156–57*nn*d, 1163*n*m, 1165–69, 1165*nn*a–b, 1167*n*1, 1170–71*nn*a–c, 1170–75, 1176–77; discipline in, 1176–77; English, 1155–56*n*c; European, 1155–56*n*c; French, 1155–56*n*c; permanent, 7*n*h, 591*n*54; strengths and weaknesses of, 1170–71*nn*a–c, 1170–75; in the United States, 150–51, 591n54. *See also* militias; the military
armor, 789–90*n*d
Arouet, François-Marie. *See* Voltaire
arrondissements, 114, 685–96*n*(C), 686
the Articles of Confederation, 188*n*2
arts, 7, 793–94; Americans and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 784*n*n, 788–95, 788*n*b, 795*n*k; aristocracy and, 788*n*a, 789–92, 794, 810*n*q; civilization and, 792*n*f; democracy and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 769–70*n*g, 788–95, 788*n*a, 791*n*e, 793*n*g, 810*n*q; equality and, 763–64*n*b, 764–65; imitative, 794–95; in India, 792*n*f; industrialization of, lxix; in Mexico, 792*n*f; in the Middle Ages, 789–90*n*d; painting, 795, 795*n*k; religion and, 6*n*h
assemblies, 411*n*o, 1256–57*n*t, 1269
assessors, 106, 118*n*14
assimilation, 654–55, 1179–80*n*1, 1180*n*b
association, lxxxiii, cxlvi, cxlvi*n*316, cxlvii, 288, 307*n*h, 711–12*n*b, 713–14*n*e, 896*n*d, 903*n*t, 948–50*n*c, 950, 1094–95, 1103, 1105, 1187–89*n*a; aristocracy and, 895*n*a, 898–99, 898–99*n*h, 898*n*g, 903–4; categories of, 897*n*e; civil, 897*n*e, 898–99*n*h, 911–17, 911*nn*a–b, 1215*n*p; civilization and, 896*n*c; commercial, 900*n*m; democracy and, 895–904, 895*n*a, 898*n*g, 905–6*nn*a–b, 905–10, 1068–70, 1068*nn*a–b; in England, 897; equality and, 895*n*a, 897–98; in Europe, 1239; freedom of, 302–12, 303–4, 307, 308–9, 308*n*j, 309–12, 310–11, 899, 914, 914*n*1, 915, 915*n*d, 916–17; government and, 896, 898–901, 902*n*s, 903–4, 914, 914*n*1, 1278*n*a; industrial, 895*n*a, 897*n*e, 902, 1235–37*n*y; industry and, 897*n*e, 902, 1235–37*n*y, 1238–39, 1238*n*c; intellectual, 895*n*a, 897*n*e, 902; laws of, 911*n*b, 915*n*d; legal, 897*n*e; moral, 897*n*e, 902; newspapers and, 905–6*nn*a–b, 905–10, 908*n*e; Norman, 911*n*b; political, 302–12, 895*n*a, 896, 897*n*e, 898–99*n*h, 902, 911–17, 911*nn*a–b; relations between civil associations and political associations, 911–17, 911*nn*a–b; religious, 897*n*e; as the remedy for evils of equality, 1268–

69; science of, 902; spirit of, 897–98*n*f; in the United States, 895–904, 895*n*a, 1068–70, 1068*nn*a–b, 1278*n*a; voluntary, 897*n*e. *See also* conventions; freedom of association
Atala, 1304–5*n*b
atheism. *See* unbelief
Atheneum, xci*n*141
Athens, Greece, 815, 816*n*b, 847, 1143*n*n
Atlantic Ocean, 34, 594, 606
Atlantic seaboard, 606, 607, 617
Attakapas, Louisiana, 567
Auburn penal system, lxi
Augustus, 782–83*n*k
Australia, 53
authority, 115–16, 116*n*b, 153, 711–12*n*b, 713–14*n*e, 716–17, 717*n*k, 1143*n*o, 1197–98*n*j, 1197–99; intellectual, 724; liberty and, 724–25, 724*n*s; marital, 1062*n*a, 1064–65; moral, 600, 600*n*60, 719–20, 720–21*n*p; religion and, 720–21*n*p, 745, 754, 756; religious, 754; in the United States, 160–61. *See also* power; secondary power
authors, 814*n*e, 819, 843–44, 843*n*a
autocracy, 1135*n*c, 1143*n*o

Bacon, Francis, cx, cxxv, 702, 705*n*q, 735*n*m; *Novum Organum,* 702–3*n*n
Bacon, Roger, 735*n*m
Bagley, Amasa, 1320*n*n, 1321*n*o
bail, 72, 72*n*d
Baines, Edward, *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain,* 792*n*f
balance of power, cxlvi–cxlvii, 122
Baltimore, Maryland, 414*n*4
bank notes, 618–19
Bank of the United States, 618–20, 618nr, 619*n*84, 620*n*s; the President and, 619
bankruptcy, lxxxiii, 364, 1104
banks, lxxxii, 619. *See also* Bank of the United States
barbarians, cxxxv*n*283, cxxxvi, cxxxvii, 514*n*o, 532, 534–35, 636, 785, 786, 1162*n*k. *See also* barbarism; savages
barbarism, cxviii, cxix–cxx, 534–35, 896*n*c, 1266–67*n*j; equality and, 878–80*n*f; in South America, 644. *See also* barbarians
Barker, 802–3*n*d. *See* Mary Russell Mitford
bar rooms, 1320
Barrot, Odilon, 121*n*h, 1239–40*n*d
Battista, Anna Maria, 74*n*b
Baudry, 998–99*n*e
Beaumont, Elie de, 167*n*a, 1062*n*b
Beaumont, Eugénie (Beaumont's sister), 1337–38*n*v
Beaumont family, liv–lv
Beaumont, Gustave de, xxviii, xxx, xxxiv*n*15, liv, liv*n*41, lv–lvi, lv*n*46, lvi*n*47, lvii–lviiin50, lviii, lviii*n*51, lix, lx, lx*n*56, lxiii–lxiv, lxv, lxxii, lxxii*n*88, lxxii*n*89, lxxiii–lxxiv, lxxv*n*95, lxxvii, lxxx, lxxxv–lxxxvi, lxxxvii, xciii, xcix, ci, cii, cii*n*171, ciii, cix*n*195, cxlii–cxliii, 36*n*d, 88*n*g, 122*n*k, 282–83*n*b, 291*n*e, 428*n*c, 515*n*a, 530*n*q, 614*n*k, 642–43*n*m, 656–57*n*h, 696–97*n*a, 769–70*n*g, 776–77*n*c, 788*n*b, 845–46*n*b, 851*n*h, 903*n*t, 1062*n*b, 1072–73*n*c, 1110–13*n*v, 1118*n*g, 1178*n*a, 1223*n*d, 1227*n*m, 1255*n*p, 1302*n*j; on administrative centralization, 147*n*k; arrival in the United States, 1365*n*b; on art, 795*n*k; Blacks and, xcvii, 548*n*30; on centralization, 143–44*n*d, 1200*n*a; Chabrol and, 1304–5*n*b, 1333*n*s, 1335*n*u; commentaries of, 47*n*d, 202*n*y, 215–17*n*m, 220, 234*n*5, 285*n*g, 290*n*d, 290*n*b,

Beaumont, Gustave de (*continued*) 297*n*m, 300*n*p, 335*n*k, 338*n*r; Constitution of 1848 and, 137–39*n*z, 225*n*r; contributions to *Democracy,* lxxii, 257*n*p, 259*n*q, 290*n*c; corrections by, 218*n*n; correspondence of, xxxii–xxxiii, xxxiii*n*10; on the *cour de cassation,* 234*n*5; criticisms of, 5*n*e; on duelling, 1109*n*s; on the education of young girls, 1041*n*a; on emancipation, 570*n*x; in England, xciv, xciv*n*152, xcvii*n*158, xcviii; on equality, cxxxii–cxxxiii*n*273; Eugénie de Beaumont (sister) and, 1337–38*n*v; on executive power, 202*n*y; Indians and, lxxii, lxxii*n*89, xcvii, cxv*n*212, 529*n*p, 537–38*n*v; in Ireland, xciv*n*152; the Irish and, xcvii–xcviii, xcix; journey to America, lxiv–lxv; letters of, 1314*n*j; library of, 550*n*e; on literature, 801–2*n*c; on manufacturing aristocracy, 81*n*s; manuscripts of, xxxi; marriage to Clémentine de Lafayette, ci; meets Andrew Jackson, 454*n*h; meets Robert Walsh, 754*n*a; mission from the French government, 2na; notes of, lxx, lxx*n*80, 137–39*n*z; notes on the constitutional committee of 1848, 450; on parties, 284*n*d; on patriotism among American writers, 388*n*s; plan for a review with Tocqueville and others, lxxvii–lxxviii; plans to visit England's penal institutions, lxxviii–lxxxiv; preparation of first edition of *Democracy,* xxx–xxxi; on the President, 202*n*y; publication of *A Fortnight in the Wilderness,* 1303*n*a; publication of *Journey to Lake Oneida,* 1295*n*a; on public institutions, 796–97*n*b; on racial prejudice, 553–54*n*o; return to France, lxxiv; slavery and, 550*n*e, 561–62*n*t, 578*n*f; on sociability, 995*n*b; Sparks and, 99–100*n*c; Tocqueville and, lxxii, xcviii, xcviii*n*162; on uniformity, 614*n*j; writings in the Quaker Collection, 548*n*c. *See also* Beaumont, Gustave de, works of

Beaumont, Gustave de, works of: *Institutions et mœurs américaines,* lxxiv; *L'Irlande, sociale, politique et religieuse,* xxxiii, xciii, xciv*n*152, xcviii–xcix, xcviii*n*161, xcix, 82*n*v, 1223*n*d; reception of, xcviii–xcix; *Lettres d'Amérique,* 82*n*v, 1304–5*n*b, 1314*n*j, 1321*n*o; "Note on the religious movement in the United States," 478*n*p. *See also Marie, ou l'esclavage aux États-Unis*

Beaumont, Jules de (Gustave de Beaumont's father), liv

beauty, 1282*n*f

Beccaria, 713–14*n*e

Bedfort, Marguerite, 63*n*20

Bedlam, 796–97*n*b

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, xliv, 5*n*e. *See also* Yale University

Belam, Mrs., xcix

beliefs, 630, 711–12*n*b, 711–25, 711*n*a, 712–13*n*c, 713*n*d, 747, 751*n*h, 752, 755, 888*n*d; authority and, 711–12*nb,* 713–14*n*e, 716–17, 717*n*k; democracy and, 1266–67*n*j; dogmatic, 711–25, 711*n*a, 712–13*n*c, 713*n*d, 716*n*j, 717*n*k, 720–21*n*p, 724–25, 724*n*s, 742*n*a, 743, 746, 962; revolution and, 711–12*n*b, 712–13*n*c; in the United States, 711–12*n*b. *See also* religion

Belknap, Jeremy, 556*n*33; *History of New Hampshire,* 666–74*n*(F), 673–74

Bell, John, 528–29*n*8, 542*n*23, 547–48*n*29
Belvedere Apollo, 795*n*k
Benoît, Jean-Louis, 986*n*a
Bensserade, 807*n*m
Bentham, Jeremy, 735*n*m
Benton, Thomas H., *Thirty Years' View; or, a History of the Working of the American Government for Thirty Years, from 1820–1850,* 625*n*w
Bergeron, Gérard, 650*n*d
Bernard, General, 349–50*n*j
Berry, Duchesse de, lxxv
Beverley, Robert, 666–74*n*(F), 667–68; *General History of Virginia,* 42*n*16; *History of Virginia from the Earliest Period,* 52–53*n*2, 556*n*33
Beyle, Marie-Henri. *See* Stendhal
Bibliothèque de Versailles, xlii
Biddle, John, 282–83*n*b, 1312–13, 1312–13*n*g
Biot, Jean-Baptiste, 869–70*n*h
Blacks, lxxxiii, cix*n*192, 454*n*1, 515–16, 515*n*a, 517, 521, 548–82, 548*n*c, 580*n*j, 1095*n*d; Anglo-Americans and, 548–82, 548*n*30, 572–73, 580–81; electoral rights of, 554–55; emancipated, 518, 550*n*f, 551, 577*n*51; emancipation of, 572*n*46; equality of, 571–72; Europeans and, 581; in the Gulf states, 575; Indians and, 529*n*p; inequality and, 550*n*f, 551–55, 551*n*32, 551*n*g; the jury system and, 553–54*n*o, 554; in Maine, 569; in Maryland, 569, 569*n*45; in Massachusetts, 569; mortality of, 565*n*41; in New England, 550*n*f; in New York, 569; in North Carolina, 569*n*45; oppression of, 517–18; in Pennsylvania, 569; population growth of, 565, 566; public opinion and, 548*n*c; religion and, 555; return to Africa, 576–77, 576*n*d, 576*n*48, 576*n*49, 577*n*50; revolutions and, 1141; servitude and, 518–19, 520*n*g; in the South, 597, 597*n*1, 1097–98*n*h; in South Carolina, 569, 569*n*45; threat posed by slavery to the United States, 548–82; in Virginia, 569, 569*n*45; voting by, 414*n*4; in the West, 566; whites and, 548–82, 548*n*30
Blackstone, 180*n*1, 180*n*b, 430*n*f, 681*n*(M), 684–85*n*(B), 686–87*n*(D), 687
Blosseville, Ernest de, lix, lxv, lxxvii, xciii, 99–100*n*c, 145–46*n*g, 536–37*n*18
Bodin, lxviii
the body, the soul and, 963–64, 963*nn*a–b
Boesche, Roger, 1247*n*d
bois-brûlé, 1344. *See also* half-breeds
Boissy d'Anglas, François Antoine, 291*n*e, 679*n*g
Bonaparte. *See* Napoléon
Bonaparte, Louis-Napolean, *coup d'état* of, 1256–57*n*t
Bonetto, Gerald M., 561–62*n*t
Bonnel, M., xxxi, xxxii*n*7, xxxii*n*8, 5*n*e, 80*n*q, 84*n*a, 763*n*a
Bonnetto, Gerald M., 282–83*n*b
Bonnin de La Bonninière, liv
Bossuet: *Discours sur l'histoire universelle,* 838*n*r; *Histoire des variations,* 822–23*n*f
Bossuet, cxviii, 810–12*n*r
Bouchitté, Louis, 478*n*p
Boulainvilliers, 532*n*r
Bourbons, lix, lix*n*55, lxxv, lxxvi, lxxvii, 446
Bourdaloue, 810–12*n*r
the bourgeois: uprising of *(Jacquerie),* 7*n*h

Bourges, Michel de, 1228*n*n
Bovenizer, David, xxiv
Bowring, Mr., 260*n*s
Brazil, 495
Brevard, Joseph, *Digest of the Public Statute Law of South Carolina,* 685–96*n*(C), 686
bridges, 1238*n*b
Bristed, John, 656–57*n*h
Brittany, 271–72
Brogan, Hugh, 625*n*w
Brosse, Pierre de, 6*n*h
Brown, 563*n*u
Brunius, Teddy, 765–66*n*e
buffalo, 524–25
Buffalo, New York, 1304
Buffon, George-Louis Leclerc, 810–12*n*r; *Histoire naturelle des oiseaux,* 765–66*n*d; *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière,* 765–66*n*d
Buisson, 372–74*n*f, 443*n*2
bureaucracy, 747*n*d, 1247*n*d
bureaucratic tyranny, 1247*n*d. *See also* administrative despotism
Burgundian faction, 7*n*h
Burgundy, France, 596
Burke, Edmund, cxvi
Burns, Dr., 1321*n*o
Byron, George Gordon, Lord, 834*n*h, 836*n*m, 932*n*c, 960–61*n*j; *Childe Harold,* 838*n*q, 841

Cabanis, 477
Caesar, Julius, 1160
Caesars, 511, 511*n*e, 511*n*g, 1246–47, 1246*n*c, 1247*n*d, 1260*n*x
Calderón, Felipe, 850*n*e
Caleb, Balderstone, 1012–13*n*k
Calhoun, Mr., 621
Calvinism, 1350–51
Cambon, 1209–10*n*d
Campe, Joachim Heinrich, *Voyage d'un Allemand au Lac Onéida,* 1297–98*n*c
Canada, 33, 276, 453*n*f, 496, 530–41, 539–40*n*19, 632, 650–51, 650*n*d, 826*n*h, 1311
Canadians, 650–51, 652, 1344, 1347, 1356. *See also* Canada; French Canadians
canals, lxxxii, lxxxiii, 1237
Candolle, 1022*n*c
Canoll, John W. Henry, 186–87*n*a
cantons, 103
capital, 1227–28, 1227*n*m, 1321–22
the Capitol, 797
Carey, Mathew, 595*n*w; *Letters on the Colonization Society and on Its Probable Results,* 569*n*45, 576*n*48
Carlo Alberto, lxxv
the Carolinas, 60*n*12, 548*n*c, 563*n*u, 607*n*70, 610, 610*n*76, 610*n*77, 666–74*n*(F), 668
Carroll, Charles, 85*n*c, 96*n*j, 542*n*[*]
the Cartesian method, cxxxi, 697–98*n*a, 699–700*n*e. *See also* Descartes, René
Cass, Lewis, cxv*n*212, 523*n*j, 524, 524*n*3, 527–28*n*7, 529*n*9, 532*n*[*], 544–46*n*26; Reports to Congress, 524, 524*n*3, 525*n*6, 534*n*s
Cass River, 1357–58
Catholicism, lxxxiii, cxxxi, 467–72, 471, 480, 480*n*t, 750*n*1, 753, 755*n*c, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; aristocracy and, 470; democracy and, 755*n*e; equality and, 469, 470; on the frontier, 1351; lower classes and, 754*n*b; mingling of races in, 553–54*n*o; monarchy and, 470, 470*n*e; politics and, 755; in the United States, 754–56; women and, 1041–42*n*c, 1042. *See also* Christianity
Catilina, 628–29*n*z

Cavallaro, Renato, 1268*n*o
censorship, 291, 292, 298–301, 852. *See also* freedom of the press
centralization, lxxxii, xcvii, cii, ciii, cxxv*n*249, cxxxv, cxlvii, 99–100*n*c, 120–21, 121*n*h, 143–44*n*d, 151*n*t, 163–64*n*e, 626–27, 1196*n*f, 1197–98*n*j, 1201–2*n*c*n*b, 1202–3, 1209*n*c, 1213*n*m, 1218–19*n*t, 1230–31*n*p, 1235–37*n*y, 1242*n*g, 1252*n*n, 1260*n*x; aristocracy and, 1203*n*d, 1219; of capital, 1227–28, 1227*n*m; causes of, 1206–8*nn*a–b, 1206–20; definition of, 143–44; democracy and, 1187–89*n*a, 1194–99, 1194*nn*a–b, 1201–2*n*c*n*b, 1202–3*n*1, 1206–8*nn*a–b, 1206–61, 1217*n*s, 1218–19*n*t, 1224–25*n*h, 1253–54*n*o, 1265, 1293*n*; democratic revolution and, 1211–12; democratic sentiments and, 1200–1202*nn*a–c, 1200–1205, 1202–3*n*1, 1203*n*d; despotism and, 1220, 1245–61; disadvantages of, 1210*n*g; in Egypt, 1214–15, 1215*n*o; in England, 1200*n*a, 1212–13*nn*j–k; equality and, 1200–1220; in Europe, 273, 1197–99, 1206–7*n*a, 1221–44, 1221*n*a; of federal government, lxxxii; feudalism and, 147; financial, 1209–10*n*d; in France, 143–44*n*d, 145–46*n*g, 148, 152*n*156, 163–64*n*e, 213*n*j, 678–79*n*(K), 679*n*g, 1209–10, 1210*n*f, 1230–31*n*p, 1239–40*n*d, 1255, 1255*n*p; the French Revolution and, 678–79*n*(K); governmental, 143–47, 144*n*f; individual independence and, 1242*n*h; industrialists and, 1234–40; industry and, 1231–41, 1231*n*r, 1235–37*n*y, 1239–40*n*d; intellectual, 1223*n*f; lack of, lxxxii; liberty and, 1241; in the Middle Ages, 147; monarchy and, 1219; monuments and, 798–99*n*e; public administration and, 1241–42; public officials and, 1224*n*2; savings and, 1227–28, 1227*n*m; the State and, 143–44*n*d; of states, lxxxii; theory of, 1187–89*n*a; in the United States, 149–56, 150*n*q, 631, 1206–8*nn*a–b; war and, 1160–62, 1161–62*n*j, 1215–16. *See also* administrative centralization; administrative decentralization; decentralization; secondary powers
centralized administration. *See* administrative centralization
cereal crops, 567
certitude, 760*n*c
Cervantes, Miguel de, 810–12*n*r
cession, 617, 617*n*82
Chabrol, Ernest de, lvi, lxv, lxv*n*68, lxvii–lxviii*n*70, lxvii–lxviii*n*71, lxviii*n*74, lxxi*n*86, lxxii*n*89, lxxiii*n*90, lxxiv, lxxvii, 18*n*a, 99–100*n*c, 145–46*n*g, 150*n*q, 167*n*a, 478*n*p, 631*n*c, 840–41*n*v, 845–46*n*b, 1304–5*n*b, 1333*n*s, 1335*n*u
Chalmer, Lionel, 52*n*4
Chamber of Deputies, cii*n*171, 206–7, 372–74*n*f, 1209–10*n*d, 1226–27*n*k
Champlain, 661–62*n*(D)
change, cvii–cxi. *See also* revolutions
Channing, William Ellery, 802–3*n*d; *The Importance and Means of a National Literature,* 802–3*n*d; *Remarks on National Literature,* 802–3*n*d
character, lxxxiii, 29; American, lxxxiii, 29, 420–23; effect of tyranny of the majority on, 420–23; laws and, 987–88*n*b
charitable establishments, 1223, 1227–28
Charles I, 59, 61
Charles II, 61

Charles X, 1359
Charles XII, 1124*n*o
Charlevoix, Pierre-François, 661–62*n*(D); *Histoire de la Nouvelle France,* 42*n*16, 530*n*11
Charter of 1814, 405*n*f
Charter of 1830, 405*n*f
charters, 60–61*n*13, 405*n*f
Chasles, Philarète, 763*n*a; "De la littérature dans l'Amérique du Nord, 802–3*n*d
chastity. *See* morals
Chateaubriand, Jean-Baptiste de, xlix, xlix*n*25, liv, lxi*n*58, lxvii*n69,* lxxxvi–lxxxvii*n*122, lxxxix, 10–12*n*q, 810–12*n*r, 822–23*n*f, 1262*n*a, 1304–5*n*b, 1337–38*n*v; *Essais sur la littérature anglaise,* 822–23*n*f; *René,* 838*n*q, 841
Chelsea, 796–97*n*b
Cherbourg sea wall, 798–99*n*e
Cherbuliez, xxxvi–xxxvii*n*20
Cherokees, 522*n*h, 533, 533*n*14, 533*n*16, 534, 535*n*t, 540, 540*n*20, 541–42, 542*n*x, 542*n*24, 544*n*25, 545, 546
Chevalier, Michel, lxxxv, 656–57*n*h; "Des chemins de fer comparés aux lignes navigables," 897–98*n*f; *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord,* 903*n*t
Chickasaws, 533*n*14, 541*n*21, 542*n*23
China, 535, 786, 786*n*o, 1123
Chippewas, 1326, 1328–29, 1334*n*t
Chiquet, 1284–85*n*k. *See* Mignet
Choctaws *(Chactas),* 526–27, 533*n*14, 537–38*n*v, 541*n*21, 542*n*23
cholera epidemic of 1831, *lxxxiv*
Christendom, 10–15, 15–16*n*w, 504, 1223–24. *See also* Christianity; Europe
Christian equality, 10, 14, 15, 24
Christianity, 24, 467–72, 482*n*u, 486–87, 487–88*n*w, 599*n*a, 733, 733*n*h, 746–47, 747*n*e, 748–49*n*f, 755*n*e, 758*n*c, 859–60, 859–60*n*m, 923–25*n*n, 960–61*n*j, 962, 1115*n*y, 1360–64, 1360*n*a; in America, 752–53; Anglo-Americans and, 705–7*n*r, 707–8*n*s, 709–10*n*u, 752–53; condemnation of slavery by, 556; despotism and, 468; doctrine of interest well understood and, 923–25*n*n, 927–28; equality and, 747–48; in Europe, 487–88*n*x, 488; liberty and, 468; missionaries, 476–77; philosophy and, 703–4*n*o; preaching, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; the Roman Empire and, 748–49; servitude and, 548–49; slavery and, 561; in the United States, 467–78; women and, 1044–45, 1044*n*f. *See also* Catholicism
Christians. *See* Christendom; Christianity
the Church, 6–7, 961
church and State, separation of, 480, 481*n*5, 752*n*k, 819–21*n*d
churches, gothic, 789–90*n*d
Cicero, 994
Cicero, Marcus Tullius, 733*n*h
Circourt, Madame de, 656–57*n*h, 1337–38*n*v
cities, 104–5*n*2, 454–55, 454*n*1, 454*n*j. *See also* towns
citizen justice, 364–65
citizens, 108, 153–54. *See also* citizenship
citizenship, 163, 163*n*c
civil associations, 897*n*e, 911–17, 911*nn*a–b, 1215*n*p
civility, 1071*n*b
civilization: art and, 792*n*f; association and, 896*n*c; barbarism and, 534–35, 896*n*c; Indians and, 530–41, 535*n*t, 536–37*n*18, 537–38*n*v; intellectual education and, 1369–72; political science and, 16–17*n*x

civilized man, cxviii
civil laws, lxxxiii, 1275–76*n*y
civil liberties, 473
civil privileges, 1230–31*n*p
civil registry, 106
civil rights, 473, 1230–31*n*p
civil society, lxxxi, cx, 4, 633, 689–90*n*a, 690–91*n*c, 987–88*n*b
civil state, lxxxiii
civil wars, 1178*n*a, 1185–86, 1186*n*3
Clarel, Guillaume, xlviii
Clark, William, cxv*n*212, 524, 524*n*3, 527–28*n*7, 532*n*[*], 728*n*c; Reports to Congress, 524, 524*n*3, 525*n*6, 534*n*s
Clarkson, Thomas: *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species,* 550*n*e; *Essai sur les désavantages de la traite,* 550*n*e
class, 700; absence of, 1283*n*h; aristocracy and, 1068–70, 1068*nn*a–b, 1069*n*c; emancipation and, 571–72; in England, 382–83, 382–83*n*j, 819–21*n*d; government of different classes, 380; influence on handling of State finances, 334–40; language and, 825–27; slavery and, 571–72; in the United States, 316–17. *See also specific classes*
the Classics, democracy and, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17
Clay, Henry, 623*n*90, 802–3*n*d
Clérel de Tocqueville family, xlviii
clergy, 480, 481, 481*n*5, 485, 753, 755*n*c, 961–62; Catholic, 753; political power of, 6–7, 6*n*h; preaching, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; spread of enlightenment by, 10; ultra-unitary movement of the, 1223*n*f. *See also* the Church
climate, 453*n*f, 654, 1052, 1052*n*a, 1054, 1284–85*n*k
coal, 1235–37*n*y
Coeur, Jacques, 7*n*h
Coffee, 542*n*[*]
Coke, Edward, 681n(M)
Collection of Massachusetts, 556*n*33
Collection of the Historical Society of Massachusetts, 683–84*n*(A). *See also* newspapers
collective individualism, 881–82*n*b
collectors, 118*n*14
colonies. *See specific colonies*
Colonization Society of Blacks, 576–77, 576*n*48
commerce, lxxxii, lxxxiii, 463–64, 613, 614, 639*n*94, 640, 640*n*h, 640*n*j, 689–90*n*a, 784*n*n, 977, 1129*n*a; American genius for, 638–42; aristocracy and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 1286–87*n*; democracy and, 85–86*n*e, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 977–78*n*h, 1138*n*h, 1235–37*n*y; despotism and, 948–50*n*c; between England and the United States, 646; equality of conditions and, 972*nn*a–b; between Europe and the United States, 638–40, 638*n*91; growth of, 613, 613*n*80; interstate, 614; liberty and, 948–50*n*c; maritime, lxxxii, 238, 244, 638–40; in the Mediterranean, 644*n*96; military power and, 647; in the North, 607, 607*n*70; between North America and South America, 645; peace and, 1178*n*a; revolution and, 1136*n*f; slavery and, 607*n*70; in the South, 607, 607*n*70; in the United States, 637–48, 638*n*91, 1103–5, 1129*n*a; between the United States and Europe, 638–40, 638*n*91
commercial laws, lxxxiii
commercial professions, 972–79,

commercial professions (*continued*) 972*nn*a–b, 973*n*1, 974*n*d, 977–79*n*j, 977*n*g, 989*n*d
commercial property, 1235–37*n*y
Committee of Indian Affairs, 547–48*n*29
common affairs, administration of, 891–93, 891*n*k
common law, lxxxii
common opinion, cxxx–cxxxi*n*267, cxxx*n*264, cxxxi*n*270, cxxxiv, 719–20, 720–21*n*p, 752. *See also* opinion; public opinion
communes, 99–100*n*c, 99*n*3, 103
communication, cxl–cxli
compétence, 234*n*5
concentration of power, 1194–99, 1194*nn*a–b, 1200–1202*nn*a–c, 1200–1220, 1202–3*n*1, 1203*n*d. *See also* centralization
Condé, Prince de, lxiv, lxxviii
Condorcet, Marquis de, *Réflexions sur l'esclavage des Noirs,* 550*n*e
confederation, 194*n*q, 583–94, 587*n*r, 590–91*n*t, 616; dangers to, 582–627; division of sovereignty in, 588–89; growth of the, 614; natural weakness of judicial system in, 241–42; war and, 1186*n*3. *See also* the Articles of Confederation; federation; the first confederation
Congress, 196–200, 459, 590, 617, 618, 618*n*r, 797, 861*n*a; division of, 248–49; foreign affairs and, 372–74*n*f; House of Representatives, 221, 249; Indians and, 528–29*n*8, 529*n*9, 542*n*23, 545–46; nullification affair and, 620–24, 623*n*88, 623*n*90; parliamentary eloquence and, 861–70, 861*nn*a–b (*see also* legislatures); powers of, 626–27; the President and, 206–7, 210–11, 215–17*n*m; right to call state militias, 274; Senate, 221, 249; tariff laws and, 620–21; war and, 274. *See also* House of Representatives; legislative powers; Senate
conjugal happiness, 819–21*n*d
Connecticut, 52*n*5, 58*n*10, 261, 490; abolition in, 553–54*n*o; act of cession by, 617*n*82; blue laws in, 62–64, 62*n*v; charter of, 58*n*10, 61; charter of New Haven, 61; Code of 1650, 62–64, 63*n*20, 65, 66, 67, 67*n*x; colonial penal laws in, 62–64; constitution of, 65; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); histories of, 666–74*n*(F), 673; laws of, 62–64, 62*n*v, 65; political jurisdiction in, 682*n*(N); population growth in, 459; population of, 459; representation in Congress, 459; War of 1812 and, 274
conscience, 1095–96*n*e
conscription, 361–62, 362*n*v, 362*n*u
Conseil d'État, 139*n*z, 175*n*h, 177, 1228–29*n*o
Conseil, Louis P., 257*n*o
conseils communaux, 99–100*n*c
conseils municipaux, 99–100*n*c
conservatives, cxvi
constables, 106
Constant, Benjamin, cxix
Constantinople, fall of, 822
constitutional conventions, 189–90, 190*n*4, 190*n*5, 190*n*g, 190*n*h
constitutional instability, cxl
constitutionality, 822–23*n*f
constitutional monarchy, 204–8, 217. *See also* monarchy
Constitution of 1848 (France), 221–22*n*p, 225*n*r
constitutions, 1260, 1375; of democratic nations, 1265; in England, 171,

679–80*n*(L), 680, 681n(M); in France, 170, 171, 679–80*n*(L); laws and, 170–71; state constitutions, 246–50 (*see also specific states*); U.S. Constitution compared to other federal constitutions, 251–55. *See also* Constitution of 1848 (France); U.S. Constitution
consubstantiality, 822–23*n*f
continental war, 682–83*n*(O)
contract law, 240, 240*n*31
conventions, 306, 308, 408, 621–22*n*v, 1209–10, 1209–10*n*d, 1255. *See also* association
Cooper, James Fenimore, lxiv, 349–50*n*j, 802–3*n*d, 804*n*h, 1304, 1329*n*r; *Excursions in Switzerland,* 998–99*n*e; *Notions of the Americans; Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor,* 802–3*n*d
Corcelle, Francisque de, xcii, xciii, ci, cii, ciii, cix*n*192, cxlv*n*314, 221–22*n*p, 480*n*t, 656–57*n*h, 696–97*n*a, 755*n*e, 816*n*b, 856*n*g, 1060*n*k, 1133*n*c; "Financial Administration of the United States," 349–50*n*j
Coriolanus, Gaius Martius, 1102
corn, 595
Corneille, Pierre, 814*n*c
corruption, 356–59, 359*n*s
Cortés, Hernán, 792*n*f
cotton plantations, 566–67, 595
Council of Nicea, 822–23*n*f
counter-revolution, cvii, cxi
counties, 99; budgets of, 125*n*26, 352, 352*n*11; county administrators, 119, 119*n*19; county assemblies, 131; county budgets, 132*n*s; county magistrates, 120; county roads, 125*n*26, 125*n*27; courts of sessions and, 125, 125*n*26; as judicial centers, 114; lack of political existence of, 115; in New England, 114–15; states and, 132–33; towns and, 119, 119*n*18, 125; in the United States, 132
country, xxvii
courage, 1104–5
Courier Français, lxxxix
Courrier, P. L., 810–12*n*r
cours de cassation, 233*n*26–27, 234*n*a
courtesans, 1057–58*n*f. *See also* prostitutes
courtesy, 1071*n*b
the courtier spirit, 420–23
Court of Common Pleas, 322–23*n*o
courts, xxvii, 114, 126–27, 131. *See also* judicial powers; judicial system; Supreme Court; *specific kinds of courts*
courts of sessions, 123, 124, 125, 125*n*27, 126, 127–28, 127*n*31, 127*n*32, 322–23*n*o; counties and, 125, 125*n*26
Cousin, Victor, cxxxii, 718*n*m
covetousness, 1187–89*n*a, 1194*n*a
Craiutu, Aurelian, 18–19*n*a
Creeks, 522*n*h, 533, 533*n*14, 540, 541–42, 542*n*23, 542*n*24, 544*n*25
creepers, 659*n*(B)
Creoles, 553–54*n*o
crime: administrative, 127–28, 128*n*[*], 129, 133; alcohol and, 365; political, 184, 200, 682*n*(N)
criminal courts, 445
criminal laws, lxxxiii, 62–64, 240
Crockett, David, 320*n*j
crowds, 1083
the Crusades, 6*n*h, 9
Cruse, Mr., 414–15*n*v
customs, cviii*n*190, 4, 1072–73*n*c. *See also* manners
Cuvier, 1072–73*n*c

Damais, 1138*n*h
Dana, Edmund, 656–57*n*h
Dandin, Perrin, cvi

dansars, 1363
Danton, Georges-Jacques, 631*n*c
Darby, 594
Darius, 1182*n*e
Dartmouth College, founding of, 240*n*32
d'Aunay, Félix Le Peletier, lxxiii, 493*n*d
David, Jacques-Louis, 795
Davis, Nancy G., 1320*n*n
decentralization, 149, 163–64*n*e, 624–25, 1161–62*n*j; in England, 163–64*n*e; in the English colonies, 632; two types of, 1213*n*m; in the United States, 629–30. *See also* administrative centralization; administrative decentralization
the Declaration of Independence, 542*n*x
Delaware, 198, 553–54*n*o, 608*n*73, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
Delaware language, 659–61*n*(C)
Delécluze, E. J., *Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Léopold Robert,* 763*n*a
Delolme (de Lolme), Jean Louis, 681n(M), 684–85*n*(B)
democracy, lxv, lxxxi, c, cvi, cxii, cxii*n*202, cxii*n*204, cxiii, cxix, cxx*n*228, cxxv*n*249, cxxvii, cxxxii, cxxxix*n*258, cxlii, cxliii*n*308, cxliv–cxlv, cxliv*n*311, cxlv*n*312, cxlv*n*315, cxlvi*n*317, cxlvii, 12–13*n*r, 21, 23*n*f, 94–95, 96*n*j, 300, 300*n*p, 307*n*h, 502*n*p, 504*n*s, 693, 693*n*g, 694–95*n*m, 700*n*g, 708, 708*n*t, 709–10*n*u, 732*n*g, 888*n*d, 1235–37*n*y, 1278–79*n*b, 1278–85, 1282*n*g, 1283*n*h, 1284–85*n*k, 1285*n*m, 1286*n*a; absolute monarchy and, 948–50*n*c; absolute power and, 511*n*f; administrative centralization and, 163–64*n*e; administrative instability in, 407–9; advantages for society, 375–401; advantages gained from, 375–401; ambition and, 1116–18*nn*a–f, 1116–28, 1121*n*j, 1123*n*n, 1126*n*r, 1129*n*a, 1131*n*e; the American Revolution and, 85–86*n*e; anarchy and, 1191–92, 1191–92*n*b; ancestry and, 882*n*a, 883, 884; in antiquity, 795*n*k, 1082, 1143*n*p; as anti-revolutionary, cxxxviii–cxl; aristocracy and, lxxxiv, 810*n*q, 1268*n*o, 1286–87*n*; art and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 769–70*n*g, 788–95, 788*n*a, 791*n*e, 793*n*g, 810*n*q; association and, 895–904, 895*n*a, 898*n*g, 905–6*nn*a–b, 905–10, 1068–70, 1068*nn*a–b; beliefs and, 711–12*n*b, 711–25, 1266–67*n*j; capabilities of, 360–63; Cartesianism and, 699–700*n*e; Catholicism and, 755*n*e; centralization and, 1187–89*n*a, 1194–99, 1194*nn*a–b, 1201–2*n*c*n*b, 1202–3*n*1, 1206–8*nn*a–b, 1206–61, 1217*n*s, 1218–19*n*t, 1224–25*n*h, 1253–54*n*o, 1293*n*; Christians and, 504; civil society and, 29; class and, 700; Classics and, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17; class interests and, 380–84; commerce and, 85–86*n*e, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 977–78*n*h, 1138*n*h; commerce in, 972, 1235–37*n*y; commercial professions and, 972; common interest and, 923*n*m; connection to others and, 883, 883*n*e, 884, 888*n*e, 890, 891–92, 891*n*k; consequences of, 1005–6; constitutions of, 1265; corruption in, 356–59; courtier spirit and, 420–26; customs and, 689–90*n*a; dangers of omnipotence of the majority in, 424–26; dangers to, 424–26, 424*n*e; definition of, 76*n*f; democratic revolutions, 17–19; despotism and, cxxxiii–cxxxiv, cxliv, 76, 117*n*d, 162,

307, 360, 418–19, 752, 948–50*n*c, 950, 1217*n*r, 1245–61, 1245*n*a, 1253–54*n*o, 1256–57*n*t, 1262–77, 1262*n*a, 1275–76*n*y; development of, 17–19; dissimilarities among, 690*n*b; distinguished from democratic revolution, 1116*n*a; doctrine of interest well understood and, 919*n*f, 920, 920*n*g, 923–25*n*n; education and, 869–70*n*h; egoism and, 933*ne,* 962*n*n; in England, xcv*n*155; English language and, 818–29, 818*n*a, 819–21*n*d; enlightenment and, 9, 769–70*ng,* 770–73, 1266–67*n*j; equality and, cxxxii–cxxxiii, 736, 872–74*nn*a–c, 872–80; in Europe, 28*n*o, 363, 500, 501*n*o, 1230, 1278–79*n*b; 505-514, 505*n*u, 505-506*n*w, 512*n*h, 512*n*j, 512-513*n*k. *See also specific countries*; in the European colonies, 50–51; failure to economize in, 339–40; faith and, 720–21*n*p; the family and, 882*n*a, 883, 884, 1031–33*nn*a–c, 1031–40, 1033–35*nn*e, 1033*n*1, 1036*n*h; foreign affairs and, 369–70, 371; forms and, 1270–71, 1270*n*r; in France, lxv–lxvi, 732*n*g; freedom of the press in, 1269–70; future of, 830*n*a; general ideas and, 732*n*f, 738–39; as God's will, 14; government and, 313–74, 1265–66, 1265–66*n*g, 1265*n*e; gravity in, 1080–81*nn*a–b, 1080–84; habits and, 29; habitual relations and, 995–99, 995*nn*a–b, 1005–6, 1005*n*a; historiography and, 853–60, 853*nn*a–b, 855*n*f; honor and, 1093–1115, 1093*n*a, 1097–98*n*h, 1106–10; ideas and, 29, 689–90*n*a, 900–901; individualism and, 697–98*n*a, 881–82*nn*a–b, 881–84, 883*n*e; industrial professions and, 972–79, 972*nn*a–b, 973*n*1, 974*n*d, 977–79*n*j, 977*n*g; industry and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 977–78*n*h, 978–79*n*j, 1028–29*n*g; inevitability of, cxvi–cxvii, 10–16, 12–13*n*r, 15–16*n*w; influence of, 689–90*n*a, 871–985, 871*n*a, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; influence on the intellectual movement in the United States, 696–870; intellectual anarchy and, 1144; interest and, 918–25, 923*n*m; isolation and, 883*n*e, 884; jurists and, 430–42; knowledge and, cxxxv; language and, 822–25, 826*n*h, 839–40; laws and, 494–504, 512–13, 512*n*m, 512*n*n; laws of, 378–79*n*e; leases and, 1020–24, 1020*n*a, 1021*n*b, 1023*n*d; legislative instability and, 322–23*n*o, 407–9; legislatures and, 861–70, 861*n*a, 864–65*n*d, 864*n*c, 866*n*[*]; liberty and, 76, 117*n*d, 163–64*n*e, 872–74*nn*a–c, 872–80, 1263–64, 1266–67*n*j, 1267*n*k; literature and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 769–70*n*g, 800–804*nn*a–h, 800–812, 801–2*n*c, 809–12*n*o–r, 810*n*q, 813–14, 813*n*a; love in, 1058*n*g; magistrates in, 380–82; the majority and, 721–23*n*r; manners and, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1071–74*nn*a–d, 1071–79, 1072–73*n*c, 1074–75*n*f, 1074*n*d, 1077*n*j, 1078–79*nn*k–m; marriage and, 1054–55*n*1, 1054–57; material enjoyments and, 935–36*nn*a–b, 935–38, 937*n*e, 965*n*b; materialism and, 956–59, 962*n*n; material well-being and, 930–31*n*b, 930–34, 930*n*a, 931, 932–33*n*d, 934*n*g, 954, 954*n*a; mediocrity in leadership and, 318–21; in the Middle Ages, 1143*n*p; the military and, 1153–77, 1153*n*a, 1156–57*nn*d, 1163*n*m, 1165*nn*a–b, 1167*n*1, 1170–

democracy (*continued*)
71*nn*a–c, 1291–92*n*; monarchical, 721–23*n*r; mores and, 29, 494–504, 512–13, 512*n*m, 512*n*n, 871*n*a, 986–1186, 986*n*a; Napoléon and, cxi*n*199; as a necessity, 693*n*f; neologisms and, 823; newspapers and, 905–6*nn*a–b, 905–10, 907*n*d, 909*n*1; omnipotence of the majority in, 402–26; opinions and, 1149; pantheism and, 757–58; parliamentary eloquence and, 861*nn*a–b, 868*n*f; parsimoniousness toward public officials, 340–43, 347*n*f; peace and, 1153–64, 1153*n*a, 1178*n*a; the perfectibility of man and, 759–62; philosophy and, civ, cxxv–cxxvi, 711–25, 713–14*n*e, 779–80*n*g; physical conditions and, lxvii–lxviii, lxix, cxii; poetry and, 830–31*nn*a–b, 830–42, 835*n*j, 837*nn*o–p, 842*n*x, 843–44m 843*n*a; political society and, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; power that American democracy exercises over itself, 364–74; preaching and, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; the press and, cxxxvi*n*287, 910*n*f; professions and, 969–71, 969*n*a; providential character of, 10–12*n*q; public expenditures of, 333–40; public institutions and, 796–97*n*b; public officials under the dominion of, 324–27; reason and, cxxxiii–cxl; relationships and, 995–99, 995*nn*a–b, 1005–6, 1005*n*a; religion and, 482*n*u, 742–43*n*b, 742–53, 748–49*n*f, 752*n*j, 752*n*k, 954–62, 954*nn*a–b, 960–61*n*j, 962*n*m, 1266–67*n*j; remedies to, 1266–67*n*j; republican government in, 376; restlessness and, 942–47, 947*n*k, 1083–84; revolution and, cxxxix*n*294, 1116*n*a, 1133–34*n*b, 1133–52, 1136*n*f, 1142–43*n*m, 1273–74, 1273*n*u; revolutions and, 1144–45*n*q, 1145*n*r, 1146–47*n*1, 1151*n*y, 1152; salaried public officials and, 325–26, 340–42*nn*7–9, 340–43; salaries and, 1025–26*n*a–b, 1025–30, 1027*n*d; science and, 763–64*n*b, 763–87, 769–70*n*g, 775–77*nn*a–c, 786–87*n*p, 810*n*q; self-regarding nature of, 835, 835*n*j; sentiments and, 689–90*n*a, 871–985, 871*n*a, 900–901; servant/master relationships and, 1007–8*nn*a–b, 1007–19, 1014–15*n*m, 1019*n*o; sociability and, 995–99, 995*n*b; as social state of Anglo-Americans, 75–88; solitude of, cxxvii, cxxvii*n*253; sovereignty and, 1265, 1265*n*e; spirit of amelioration in, 338–39; stasis and, cxxxviii–cxxxix; sympathy and, 1005–6, 1005*n*a; tastes and, 871*n*a; temperament and, 1083–84, 1089–92; theater and, 845–46*nn*a–b, 845–52; tyranny of, 411*n*o; unity and, 758*n*d; useful arts and, 788–90, 789–90*n*d, 791*n*e, 798*n*c; vanity and, 1087; vices of, 356–59, 377, 407–9; violence in, 418–19; *vs.* representative governments, 317–18, 317*n*g; war and, 1153–64, 1153*n*a, 1160*n*g, 1161–62*n*j, 1162*n*k, 1178–80*nn*1–2, 1178–86, 1178*n*a, 1180*n*b, 1182*n*e, 1184*n*h, 1186*n*3; warrior mores in, 1291–92*n*, 1292; weaknesses of, 377; wealth and, 85–86*n*e, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 1090–91, 1138*n*h; work and, 969–71, 969*n*a. *See also* democratic social state; equality; sovereignty of the people

Democracy in America, xxxiv*n*13; appendices to, xxxvi–xxxvii, xxxvi–xxxvii*n*20; Beaumont's role in writ-

ing and revising, lxxii; as a collaborative effort, lxxii; commentaries of first readers, xxxiv*n*15, 5*n*e (*see also specific readers*); commentaries on, xxxiv*n*15, xxxvi, 5*n*e, 10–12*n*q; compared with *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution,* cvii*n*188; completion of, ciii; conception of, lxi–lxxiv, lxi*n*58, 5; copies of, xxxiv–xxxv, xxxiv*n*13; drafts of, xxxvi; editions of, xxii, xxxiii–xxxvii, xxxv*n*17, xlvii, lxxxiv–lxxxix, lxxxv*n*119; England and, xciii–xcix; errors in, xxxiv–xxxv, xxxv*n*16, xxxv*n*17, xxxv*n*18; first edition of, *lxxxiv*–lxxxix, lxxxv*n*119; fragments presented with, xxxvi, xxxvi*n*19; French Revolution and, cvi–cxvi, cxii*n*201; Gallimard edition, xxxv*n*17; goal of, 31–32, 31*n*t; key terms in, xxvi–xxvii; main idea of, xxvi; manuscripts of, xxx–xxxiii, xxx*n*2, xxxii*n*6, xlii–xliii, lxviii; marginalia in, xxxvi; Nolla edition, xxii; point of departure, 45–73; present edition of, xxxiii–xxxvii; reception of, xlviii, lxxxix–xciii, xc*n*135, xc*n*138, xci*n*141, xci*n*142, ciii–civ; sources for, 30–31; time and, cxvi*n*217; title of, lxxxviii–lxxxvix, lxxxviii*n*128, ciii, 29*n*p; translation of, xxi–xxiv; truth and the writing of, cxxiii–cxxiv; wins the Montyon prize, xcii; writing of, xxix, lxxx–lxxxiv, lxxxiii–lxxxiv*n*116, lxxxiv–lxxxv, xciii–cv, cii*n*170, cxxiii–cxxiv, 30–31, 689–90*n*a, 690–91*n*c, 690*n*b, 691–92, 693–94, 693*n*j, 694–95*n*m, 696–97*n*a, 697–98*n*a, 769–70*n*g, 777*n*d, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–90

democratic anarchy, 1247*n*d

democratic despotism, cxxxii–clx, cxxxv–cxxxvi, cxxxvi*n*287, cxxxvii–cxxxix, cxxxvii*n*289, cxliv, 360, 1161–63, 1163*n*m, 1230–61, 1261*n*y. *See also* despotism, democracy and

democratic ideas, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294, 1195

democratic instincts, 742–53, 742*n*a

democratic liberty, 689–90*n*a

"democratic monster," cxlii

the Democratic party, 287, 287*n*h, 617

democratic republics, 363, 451–514

democratic revolution, 18–19*n*a, 693, 694*n*k, 708, 708*n*t, 780, 1217*n*r, 1243–44; ambition and, 1119; beliefs and, 712–13*n*c; centralization and, 1211–12; distinguished from democracy, 1116*n*a; in England, 1212*n*j; individualism and, 885–86, 886*n*c

democratic sentiments: centralization and, 1200–1202*nn*a–c, 1200–1205, 1202–3*n*1, 1203*n*d; political society and, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294

democratic social state, 689–94, 693*n*f, 721–23*n*r, 727–28*n*b, 732*n*g, 1278–85, 1283*n*h, 1284*n*j; art and, 794–95; despotism and, 1275–76*n*y; fine arts and, 793–94; perfectibility of man and, 759*n*a; revolutions and, 1145*n*r. *See also* democracy

Dens, Judge, 459*n*p

deputies, 131, 131*n*38

Descartes, René, cx, cxxv, cxxxi, 697–98*n*a, 699–700, 699–700*n*e, 702–3*n*n, 704, 704*n*p, 705*n*q, 712–13*n*c. *See also* Cartesian method

Descourtiz, M. E., *Voyages d'un naturaliste et ses observations.,* 659*n*(B)

désert, 36*n*d

Des Moines River, 35

despotism, cxvii, cxviii, cxix, cxxxiii*n*276, cxxxiv*n*278, cxliii, cxlvii, cxlviii, 12–13*n*r, 15–16*n*w, 88, 158–59*n*y, 159, 163–64*n*e, 165, 386–

despotism (*continued*)
87*n*r, 412–13*n*s, 507, 587*n*r, 631, 635, 752, 778–79*n*f, 877–88*n*e, 887–89, 887*n*a, 888*n*e, 889*n*f, 890, 1081–83, 1187–89*n*a, 1191–92*n*b, 1194*n*a, 1244, 1246*n*c, 1247*n*d, 1249*n*f, 1251*n*m, 1268*n*n, 1283*n*h, 1293–94*n*; administrative, 1204*n*f, 1234–40, 1235–37*n*y, 1245–61, 1245*n*a, 1249*n*e, 1252*n*n, 1255–56*n*q, 1260*n*x; anarchy and, 1250–51*n*j; arbitrariness of magistrates under, 327–30; centralization and, 147, 148–49, 1220, 1245–61; Christianity and, 468; commerce and, 948–50*n*c; definition of, 1245*n*b; democracy and, cxxxii–clx, cxxxiii–cxxxiv, cxxxv–cxxxvi, cxxxvi*n*287, cxxxvii–cxxxix, cxxxvii*n*289, cxliv, 162, 307, 360, 418–19, 752, 948–50*n*c, 950, 1161–63, 1163*n*m, 1230–61, 1245*n*a, 1253–54*n*o, 1256–57*n*t, 1261*n*y, 1262–77, 1262*n*a, 1275–76*n*y; equality and, 888*n*e, 889, 1262; Europe and, 1245–46, 1246*n*c; the industrial class and, 1234–35*nn*5; industrialists and, 1234–35*n*5, 1234–40, 1235–37*nn*y–z; liberty and, 887*n*a, 888*n*e, 889*n*f, 1161–62, 1161–62*n*j; the majority and, 721–23*n*r, 724–25 (*see also* tyranny of the majority); military, 1247*n*d; nationalism and, 158–59*n*y; oriental, 231–32*n*z; paternal, 1249*n*e, 1250–51; public affairs and, 948–50*n*c; in towns, 102–3; types of, 1247*n*d; the United States and, 418–19, 419–20*n*b, 1245; varieties of, cxix. *See also* absolute monarchy; tyranny
Desvatins, 1299*n*f. *See* La Croix de Watines family
determinism, cxvi, cxvii, cxviii
Detroit, Michigan, 1308, 1311, 1312, 1313–14*n*h
Detroit River, 1311
Devatines, 1299*n*f. *See* La Croix de Watines family
devotion, 918–25, 918*n*a, 919*n*d, 921–22, 921*n*j, 923–25*n*n, 927, 928*n*e
De Wattines, 1299*n*f. *See* La Croix de Watines family
Díaz, José-Luis, 800–801*n*b
Díez de Corral, Luis, 18–19*n*a, 317*n*g, 480*n*t, 679*n*g, 712–13*n*c
Digeste général des acts de la législature de la Louisiane, 685–96*n*(C), 686
Digest of the Laws of Louisiana, 443*n*2
Digest of the Laws of Pennsylvania, 131*n*38
district attorneys, 135*n*32
district courts, 233*n*26–27
divinity, 837–38, 839*n*s. *See also* God
division of labor, 642–43, 642–43*n*m
division of powers, sovereignty and, 239
division of property, 459, 460
divorce, 1064*n*f
doctrinaires, 885*n*b
doctrine of interest well understood, 918–25, 918*n*a; Christianity and, 923–25*n*n, 927–28; democracy and, 919*n*f, 923–25*n*n; enlightenment and, 921*n*j, 923; in Europe, 920; religion and, 923–25*n*n, 926–29, 926*n*a; in the United States, 918–29, 918*n*a, 923–25*n*n, 926*n*a; virtue and, 921–22, 922*n*k
domanial property, 1266*n*h
dominion, xxvii
Doran, Eva, 1337–38*n*v
doubt, cxxii, cxxii*n*242, cxxv, 3*n*a, 965–68, 965*nn*a–b
Doysié, Abel, xxxi*n*3
Drago, Roland, 332*n*d
Dreer, Ferdinand, 372–74*n*f
Drescher, Seymour, liv*n*41, 102*n*e, 570*n*x, 981*n*c, 1200*n*a

drunkenness, lxxxiii
duelling, lxxxiii, 1109, 1109*n*s, 1110–13*n*v
Duponceau, 72*n*d, 518*n*[*]; *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society,* 659–61*n*(C)
Duquesne, 650
Du système pénitentiaire . . . See Système pénitentaire in French index
Dutch colonies, 495
Dutch Republic, 251, 253*n*36, 592*n*55
Dyer, Mary, 63–64*n*25

the Eastern Empire, end of, 7*n*h
eclecticism, cxxxii
economy, cxx*n*229; of the North, 560; slavery and, 561–62*n*t; of the South, 560
Edinburgh, Scotland, 1359
education, xxvii, lxxxi, 6*n*h, 106, 1369–72; in America, 86–87; civilization and, 1369–72; Classics, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17; democracy and, 869–70*n*h; equality and, 869–70*n*h; in Europe, 493, 1223; of girls, 1041–42*nn*a–c, 1041–47, 1044*n*f; government and, 1223; in the Gulf states, 491; intellectual, 1369–72; in New England, 490–91, 490*n*a; in the Northeast, 498; public, lxxxi, 106, 134–35*n*41, 134*n*40, 343*n*10; in the South, 491; in the United States, 490–91, 490*n*a, 493, 494; in the West, 491; of women, 1065*nn*g–h. *See also* schools
Edward I, 1255*n*p
egalitarian society, cxxxii–cxxxiii*n*273
egoism, cxxxv, cxxxv*n*282, 83, 881–82, 881–82*n*b, 882*n*d, 898–99*n*h, 921*n*j, 923–25*n*n, 933*ne,* 993, 995*n*b, 1086*n*c, 1222–23*n*1, 1272*n*t; democracy and, 962*n*n
Egypt, 1214–15, 1215*n*o; centralization in, 1214–15, 1215*n*o
elected offices, 121–22, 121*n*j, 122
election crisis, 222–24
elections, 890, 890*n*j, 893, 893*n*o; indirect, 321, 321*n*k; mode of, 218–22, 220*n*20 220*n*21; parties and, 322; of the President, 211–24; re-election of the President, 225–26*n*u. *See also* elective system
elective power, 122
elective system, 211–12, 211–14, 217–18, 222–24. *See also* elections
electoral college, 220–21, 220*n*20 220*n*21
electoral conditions, 677*n*(H)
electoral laws, influence exercised by democracy on, 322–23
electoral lists, 104
electoral reform, 386–87*n*r
electoral rights, 95–96, 95*n*h, 310–11, 313–14, 321, 336–37, 553–54*n*o, 554–55, 561, 684–85*n*(B)
electoral voice, tyranny of the, cxxxvii
electors, 220–21, 220*n*20, 220*n*21
eloquence, 859–60, 859–60*n*m, 861–70
emancipation, 572*n*46, 577*n*51, 1016–17; in the Antilles, 572*n*47; class and, 571–72; difficulties of, 564–82, 580*n*52; in France, 570*n*x; in the North, 574; in the South, 562–72, 571*ny*, 572–75, 578–82; in the United States, 564–674. *See also* abolition; freedmen
emigration, 49*n*e; Catholic, 468; from Europe, 457–59, 464, 566, 1323–24; forced emigration of Indians, 525–29, 542–47; from Ireland, 468; from New England, 459; of the North toward the South, 614; to the United States, 27, 49–50, 49*n*e, 53–54, 457–59, 464, 468, 566, 1323–24

Encyclopedia Americana, 659–61*n*(C)
Encyclopédie, 1110–13*n*v, 1245*n*b
England, xciv*n*152, 656–57*n*h, 896, 903, 1212*n*k, 1235–37*n*y; acquisition of wealth in, 973*n*c; America and, 767–68*n*f; aristocracy in, lxxxiv, xcvi–xcvii*n*157, xcvii, 165, 382–83, 786–87*n*p, 973*n*c, 978–79*n*j, 1212, 1212*n*j, 1251*n*k, 1286*n*; armies in, 1155–56*n*c; association in, 897; as center of commerce in Europe, 645; centralization in, xciv–xcv, 146, 1200*n*a, 1211–12, 1212–13*nn*j–k; class in, 382–83, 382–83*n*j, 819–21*n*d; constitution of, 171, 679–80*n*(L), 680, 681n(M); corruption in, 357; decentralization in, 146, 163–64*n*e; democracy in, xcv*n*155; *Democracy in America* and, xciii–xcix; democratic revolution in, 1212*n*j; electoral rights in, 684–85*n*(B); equality of the sexes in, 1062*n*b; the family in, 1033–35*n*e; France and, 647; House of Commons, 180; House of Lords, 180, 180*n*1; industry in, 1235–37*n*y; judicial power in, 172–73; jury system in, 684–85*n*(B), 686–87*n*(D); literature and, 763–64*n*b; maritime dominance of, 647; middle classes in, 960–61*n*j; as a "mixed government," 411*n*o; monarchy in, 163–64*n*e; morals in, 1053, 1053*n*b; national pride in, 1290–91; New England and, 59–60; newspapers in, 909; Parliament in, 171; penal institutions in, lxxviii–lxxxiv; political jurisdiction in, 180, 180*n*1, 181, 183; the poor in, 382–83, 382–83*n*j; poor laws in, xciv–xvc; poor tax in, 337; population growth in, 459; as possible reference point, lxxxiv; property in, 1223*n*d; public administration in, 1211–12; public institution in, 796–97*n*b; religion and, 50, 960–61*n*j; science and, 763–64*n*b; servant/master relationships in, 1007–8*n*b, 1014–15*n*m; sovereignty of the people in, 1197*n*g; taxes in, 346; the United States and, 646; war and, 361; women in, 1048*n*b, 1053, 1053*n*b, 1064*n*e, 1066*n*j; in the XVIIIth century, 1290–91*n*. *See also* the English
the English, 644, 948–50*n*c; Americans and, 646; commerce and, 948–50*n*c, 950; enlightenment of, 735*n*m; general ideas and, 726, 726*n*a, 729–32, 734–35, 735*n*m; gravity of, 1081, 1081*n*d, 1082; habitual relations of, 995–98, 995*n*ab; Indians and, 534*n*17; industry and, 948–50*n*c, 950; national pride of, 1290–91; in the New World, 651, 1208–9; originality and, 1091–92*n*d; physiognomy of, 50; reserve of, 997, 997*n*d, 998–99*n*e; sociability of, 995–98, 997*n*d, 998–99*n*e; temperament of, 1085–86, 1085*n*a; unions with Indians, 534*n*17; vanity of, 1085–86, 1085*n*a, 1086*n*e. *See also* England; English colonies
English colonies, 37, 188, 632, 650*n*1, 651; decentralization in, 632; family resemblances among, 51; historical memorials of, 666–67, 666–74*n*(F); Indians and, 529*n*10, 547*n*a; industriousness of, 560; liberty of the, 60; mores in, 632; Puritanism of, 662–65*n*(E); slavery in the, 52; sovereignty of the people in the, 92; Virginia, 51–52. *See also* Anglo-Americans
English language, 819–21*n*d; American *vs.* British, 819, 821, 822; borrowing

of foreign terms, 822; creation of new words by Americans, 822; modification of by American democracy, 818–29, 818*n*a, 819–21*n*d; neologisms in, 822–23*n*f
English literature, 800*n*a, 803–4
English merchant marines, 644, 644*n*95
Englishness, 689–90*n*a
English wars, 9
enlightened self-interest, xxvi, 365
enlightenment, xxvii, 7, 10, 295, 463, 488–94, 700*n*j, 726*n*a, 746, 769–70*n*g, 770; of Anglo-Americans, 490; aristocracy and, 727–28*n*b, 1214; democracy and, 769–70*ng,* 770–73, 1266–67*n*j; doctrine of interest well understood and, 921*n*j, 923; equality of conditions and, 717–18, 772*n*j; experience and, 493–94; gradual, 365; independence and, 1212–13; Indians and, 530, 535; inheritance laws and, 770–71, 772; lack displayed in American government, 314–18; religion and, 67, 479
the Enlightenment, cx
entail, 675–76*n*(G)
envy, 946, 946*n*h, 1194*n*a, 1203–4
Epicurean philosophy, 941
equal division, law of, 82*n*v, 83, 84–85
equality, lxxxiii, ciii, cvi, cix, cxvii–cxxix, cxviii, cxxxiv*n*278, cxxxv, cxlii, cxlii*n*303, cxliii, cxliv, cxliv*n*310, cxlvi*n*317, cxlviii, 2na, 4, 7–9, 29, 76, 455, 561, 690–91*n*c, 691–92, 692*n*e, 694–95*n*m, 700*n*g, 705–7*n*r, 708, 719, 720–21*n*p, 733–34, 736, 746, 750, 763–64*n*b, 828, 978–79*n*j, 1072–73*n*c, 1074*n*d, 1132, 1187–89*n*a, 1193*n*c, 1196, 1200*n*a, 1201, 1202, 1206–7*n*a, 1220*n*u, 1237*n*a, 1238*n*c, 1250–51*n*j, 1256*n*r, 1265*n*f, 1272*n*t, 1273, 1278–79*n*b, 1278–85, 1283*n*h, 1290*n,* 1291–92*n,* 1373; ambition and, 1116–17*n*b, 1118*n*f, 1120; among the Indians, 40; in antiquity, 732–33, 733*n*h; arts and, 763–64*n*b, 764–65; association and, 895*n*a, 897–98; autocracy and, 1143*n*o; barbarism and, 878–80*n*f; in Beaumont's *Marie,* cxxxii–cxxxiii*n*273; of Blacks, 571–72; Catholicism and, 469, 470; centralization and, 1200–1220; in China, 1123; Christianity and, 10, 14, 15, 24, 747–48; civil society and, 29; commerce and, 972*nn*a–b, 989nd; commercial professions and, 989*n*d; consequences of, 720–21*n*p, 1005–6; dangers of, 745; democracy and, cxxxii–cxxxiii, 736, 872–74*nn*a–c, 872–80; desire for, 316; despotism and, 888*n*e, 889, 1262; development of, 10–11; enlightenment and, 717–18, 772*n*j; envy and, 946, 946*n*h; in Europe, 1278–79*n*b; in France, 873; France and, 894; free institutions and, 1191–92*n*b, 1191–93; general ideas and, 717–18, 718*n*m, 720–21*n*p, 734, 737, 739*n*c; habits and, 29; history and, cxviii; honor and, 1113–15; ideas and, 29; independence and, 1276–77, 1277*n*b; individualism and, 883; industrial professions and, 989*n*d; industry and, 980–81*nn*a–b, 1231, 1241, 1241*n*e; inevitability of, 10–12*n*q, 12–13*n*r; influence on education, 869–70*n*h; intellectual, 87–88, 455, 490, 702*n*m; isolation and, 888*n*e; language and, 825, 826*n*h, 827*n*j; leveling of civilization by, 1309–11; liberal instincts and, 1204*n*e; liberty and, cxix, 875*n*d, 877–88*n*e, 893–94,

equality (*continued*)
1262*n*a, 1278*n*a; literature and, 763–64*n*b, 764–65, 800–801*n*b; love of, 455, 872–74*nn*a–c, 872–80; material enjoyments and, 938; material well-being and, 944–45, 1253–54*n*o; morals and, 1052–54*nn*a–c, 1052–61, 1055*n*d, 1059*n*h; mores and, 29, 986, 986*n*a, 987–88*nn*a–b, 987–94, 989*n*d; newspapers and, 909–10; in the New World, 495; perfectibility of man and, 759–62, 759*n*b; philosophy and, 717–18, 718*n*m, 739*n*c; poetry and, 832, 834, 835, 842; political consequences of, 89–90; positions and, 1130; property and, 1136*n*f; Protestantism and, 469–70; religion and, 745–46, 747, 752, 754; revolution and, 1133–34*n*b, 1133–52, 1135*n*c, 1141–42*n*m, 1144–45*n*q, 1145*n*r, 1214*n*n, 1243–44, 1274*n*v; science and, 763–64*n*b, 764–65, 775–76*n*b, 776; of the sexes, 1062–64*nn*a–e, 1062–67, 1064*n*h, 1067*n*m; sympathy and, 989–90*n*f; in the United States, cxxxii–cxxxiii*n*273, 86–87, 88, 495, 691–92, 735*n*m, 759–62, 1208–9, 1212, 1309–11; war and, 1178–80*nn*1–2, 1178–86, 1178*n*a, 1180*n*b, 1182*n*e, 1184*n*h, 1186*n*3; wealth and, 1228. *See also* democracy

equality of conditions, 2na, 4, 29, 76, 455, 708, 978–79*n*j, 1187–89*n*a, 1196, 1283*n*h, 1290*n,* 1373; ambition and, 1116–17*n*b, 1120; among the Indians, 40; autocracy and, 1143*n*o; in China, 1123; civil society and, 29; commerce and, 972*nn*a–b; commercial professions and, 989*n*d; consequences of, 720–21*n*p, 1005–6; despotism and, 1262; development of, 10–11; enlightenment and, 717–18, 772*n*j; France and, 894; general ideas and, 717–18, 718*n*m, 720–21*n*p, 734, 737, 739*n*c; habits and, 29; ideas and, 29; industrial professions and, 989*n*d; inevitability of, 10–12*n*q, 12–13*n*r; isolation and, 888*n*e; liberty and, 875*n*d; material well-being and, 1253–54*n*o; morals and, 1052–54*nn*a–c, 1052–61, 1055*n*d, 1059*n*h; mores and, 29, 986, 986*n*a, 987–88*nn*a–b, 987–94, 989*n*d; newspapers and, 909–10; in the New World, 495; philosophy and, 717–18, 718*n*m, 739*n*c; property and, 1136*n*f; revolution and, 1133–34*n*b, 1133–52, 1135*n*c, 1141, 1144–45*n*q, 1144–46, 1145*n*r, 1151–52; in the United States, 495; wealth and, 1228. *See also* equality

Erie, Pennsylvania, 1311

Europe, 153, 276, 644, 1255–56*n*q, 1280*n*c; absolute monarchy in, 68; administrative despotism in, 1255–56*n*q; administrative instability in, 409; administrative powers in, 1228–30; administrative science in, 1228–29; America and, 67–68, 768, 805*n*j; Americans in, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1002*n*c; aristocracy in, 1221–22, 1222–23*n*1, 1232–33; armies in, 1155–56*n*c; associations in, 1239; centralization in, 273, 1197–99, 1206–7*n*a, 1221–44, 1221*n*a; charitable establishments in, 1223; Christianity in, 487–88*n*x, 488; compared with America, 67–68; concentration of power in, 1221–44; constitutional monarchies in, 217; current state in, 28*n*o; democracy in, 28*n*o, 500, 501*n*o, 1230, 1278–79*n*b; despotism and, 1245–46, 1246*n*c; doctrine of inter-

est well understood in, 920; education in, 493, 1223; emigration from, 464, 566; equality in, 2na, 4–5, 1063, 1278–79*n*b; equality of the sexes in, 1063; federal constitutions in, 251–55; girls in, 1042–43; honor in, 1104 (*see also* feudal honor); independence of thought in, 416–17; instability of sovereigns in, 1221–44; judicial powers in, 1228–30; judicial system in, 244, 245; lack of homogeneity in, 270, 271–72; legislative instability in, 409; liberty in, 68, 877, 1208–9; literature and, 763–64*n*b; manners in, 1072–73*n*c; middle class of, 512*n*j; monarchies in, 210–11; morals in, 1059; mores in, 1052*n*a; need for democratic institutions in, 513–14, 514*n*o; pantheism in, 757; philosophy in, 702–3*n*n, 702–5, 702*n*m, 703–4*n*o; political development in, 65, 67–68; political jurisdiction in, 181, 183–84 (*see also specific countries*); population of, 654, 655*n*4; positions in, 1129, 1129*n*b; possibility of democracy in: 505-514, 505*n*u, 505-506*n*w, 512*n*h, 512*n*j, 512-513*n*k; relevance of *Democracy* to, 505–6*n*w, 505–14, 505*n*u, 512–13*n*k, 512*n*h, 512*n*j; religion in, 479, 479*n*q, 487–88*n*x, 488; revolution and, 1374; revolution in, 1141; revolutions in, 1222, 1222*n*c; science and, 763–64*n*b; sovereign power in, 1221–44; sovereignty of the people in, 1197, 1197*n*g; susceptibility of Americans in, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a; taste for material well-being in, 931, 932–33*n*d; territory of, 653–54, 654*n*2; unbelief in, 488; uniform rule in, 1197–99; the United States and, 638, 682–83*n*(O); upper classes of, 512*n*j; war and, 273, 1178–80*nn*b, 1180–81, 1180–81*n*c; women in, 1062*n*a, 1062*n*b, 1063, 1063*n*c, 1065. *See also specific countries*

European colonies, 50–51, 495. *See also* European settlements; *specific colonies*

Europeans, 50–51, 517, 521; Blacks and, 581; China and, 786; descendents of, 654–55; emigration to the United States, 457–59; evils committed in the New World, 550*n*d; habits of, 494; Indians and, 536–37*n*18, 537–38*n*v, 539–40, 539–40*n*19; interest in the American wilderness, 836; in the New World, 37–38, 44, 48, 50–51; in North America, 457–59; opinions of, 692; oppression of other races by, 517–18; physiognomy of, 48, 748–49*n*f; sentiments of, 692. *See also* European colonies; European settlements; settlers

Everett, Alexander Hill, 656–57*n*h, 802–3*n*d

Everett, Edward, xlii, lxxiv, cxi*n*200, 430*n*f, 528–29*n*8, 530*n*[*], 530*n*q, 544*n*y, 656–57*n*h

evil, 1094, 1095–96*n*e, 1114. *See also* vice

Evrard de Belisle, Émilie, li*n*31

exclusion, spirit of, 881–82*n*b

executive powers, cxlvii, 201–3, 202*n*y, 205–6*n*a, 626–27, 1194*n*a, 1230–31*n*p; accidental causes that can increase the influence of, 209–10; advantages of strong, 201; dependency on legislative powers, 411*n*o; elective system and, 211–12; French and American compared, 204–8; jurists and, 435, 435*n*n; legislative power and, 206–7, 210–11, 215–16, 215–17*n*m; the majority and, 404, 404*n*d; in the states, 249–50. *See also* the Presidency

experience, enlightenment and, 493–94

fact, 1114*n*x
faith, cxxx, cxxx*n*266, cxxxi, 482, 485, 705–7*n*r, 714–16, 720–21*n*p, 745, 965, 965*n*a, 968. *See also* beliefs; religion
the family: aristocracy and, 1031*n*a, 1032, 1033–35*n*e, 1035–40, 1037*n*j; democracy and, 882*n*a, 883, 884, 1031–33*nn*a–c, 1031–40, 1033–35*nn*e, 1033*n*1, 1036*n*h; in England, 1033–35*n*e; family spirit, 80–85, 509; feudalism and, 1040; in France, 1031*n*b, 1033*n*1, 1036; law of inheritance and, 80–85; in Rome, 1032; in the United States, 1031–40, 1031*n*b, 1032*n*c, 1033–35*n*e, 1033*n*1. *See also* ancestry
fatalism. *See* fatality
fatality, cxvi–cxvii, cxxv*n*249, 857–59, 858*n*j, 858*n*k, 1284–85*n*k
Faucher, Léon, lxxxix
F. D. (unidentified source), 1263–64*n*c
federal Constitution. *See* the U.S. Constitution
federal courts, 229–50, 240*n*b; cases involving federal laws, 238; cases involving foreign ambassadors, 237; circulation of money and, 238; contracts and, 240, 240*n*31m, 240*n*32; district courts, 233*n*26–27; jurisdiction of, 234–41, 235–36*n*27, 237, 238; litigation between states and, 237–38, 237*n*28, 244, 245; maritime commerce and, 238; piracy and, 238*n*29; procedures of (way of proceeding), 241–44; sovereignty and, 236, 238–39; state courts and, 232–33, 235–36, 235–36*n*27; states and, 232–33, 235–36, 235–36*n*27, 241–44; Supreme Court (*see* Supreme Court); tariff law and, 238; unconstitutional state laws and, 240
federal governments, lxxxii. *See also* centralization; government; the U.S. federal government
federalism, cxlvi
The Federalist, 186–87*n*a, 188*n*2, 192–93*nn*8, 192*n*6, 193*n*n, 204–5*n*z, 207*n*17, 247*n*35, 248–49*n*35, 268, 274, 323, 372–74*n*f, 411*n*o, 413*n*t, 425–26
Federalists, 282–83*n*b, 283–84
federal laws, 231, 231*n*5, 239–40, 267–70, 268–69*n*40, 497
federal legislatures, 248–49
federal militias, 274–75
federal powers, 195–250, 607–8, 612–27, 613*n*h, 614
federal system: advantages of, 255–63, 276; applicability of the, 263–76; complication of divided sovereignties, 264–66; complication of means in the, 264–66; homogeneity and, 270–72; lack of centralization in the, 273–74; special utility for America, 255–63; unification of advantages resulting from large and small sizes of nations, 260; vices in the, 264–66; war and the, 272–73, 272*n*c
federal taxes, lxxxii
federation, lxxxi, lxxxii, 194*n*q, 465–66. *See also* confederation
felonies, 1100
Ferdinand, King, 287*n*h
Feuchères, Baroness de, lxiii–lxiv, lxxviii
feudal honor, 1093*n*a, 1096–1102, 1106–10
feudalism, 14, 19–20, 68, 532*n*r, 1101*n*k; aristocracy and, 1101*n*k; centralization and, 147; decline of, 22–23; the

family and, 1040; mores and, 989–92. *See also* feudal honor; feudal power
feudal power, 7–9, 7–10, 7*n*h. *See also* feudalism
Feuillet, Mr., 163*n*d, 1110–13*n*v
fighting, 1109*n*s. *See also* duelling
figurative language, 825
finances, lxxxi
financial centralization, 1209–10*n*d
financiers, 6*n*h, 7
fine arts. *See* arts
fines, 133
firearms, 7*n*h, 9
fires, 677–78*n*(I)
the first confederation, 251–52, 252*n*g, 255, 283
fixed ideas, 742*n*a
Flanders, 596
Flint, Michigan, 1333–34, 1333*n*s
Flint River, 1333–34, 1333*n*s, 1340, 1342
floral games, 7*n*(I), 7*n*h
Florence, 1143*n*n, 1143*n*p
Florentines, 948–50*n*c, 950
Florida, 492–93*n*7, 567
Fontanelle, 810–12*n*r
force, 231–32*n*z, 1272*n*t
foreign affairs, 366–74, 367*n*16, 617
foreign policy, 366–74, 367*n*16
foreseeability, cxxvi
forms, 750, 750*n*g, 1270–71, 1270*n*r, 1271*n*s, 1273
fornication, lxxxiii
Fort Brewerton, 1295
Fort Malden, 1311
A Fortnight in the Wilderness, xxxvii, 1303–59, 1303*n*a
Fourierism, 900*n*j
France, cxx, 8, 271–72, 408, 415–16*n*x, 462, 477, 590–91*t,* 596, 634, 637, 650*n*d, 822, 896, 1212*n*k, 1373–74; absolute monarchy in, 163–64*n*e; acts of sovereignty in, 586*n*[*]; administration in, 99–100*n*c, 121*n*h, 127, 144*n*g, 148, 148*n*[*], 165, 1228–29*n*o, 1231*n*4; administrative centralization in, 121*n*h, 144*n*g, 148, 148*n*[*], 165; administrative hierarchy in, 127; administrative powers in, 1228–29*n*o, 1231*n*4; administrative science in, 1228–29*n*o; ambition and, 1116–17*n*b; aristocracy in, xcvii, 1060–61; armies in, 1155–56*n*c; *arrondissements,* 114; central government of, 586*n*[*]; centralization in, 143–44*n*d, 145–46*n*g, 148, 152*n*15, 163–64*n*e, 213*n*j, 678–79*n*(K), 679*n*g, 1209–10, 1210*n*f, 1230–31*n*p, 1239–40*n*d, 1255, 1255*n*p; Chamber of Deputies, 372–74*n*f; as champion of freedom of the seas, 647; charter of 1814, 145–46*n*g; circulation of thought in, 492–93*n*7; compared to the United States, 596; *Conseil d'État,* 175*n*h, 177; Constituent Assembly, 738; constitution of the year VIII, 175*n*h; Constitution of 1848, 137–39*n*z, 221–22*n*9, 225*n*r; constitutions of, 137–39*n*z, 170, 171, 175*n*h, 221–22*n*9, 225*n*r; conventions in, 148, 408, 738, 1209–10, 1209–10*n*d, 1255; corruption in, 357; *cours de cassation,* 233*n*26–27, 234*n*a; courts in, 233*n*26–27, 234*n*a; current state of, 22–26, 23*n*f; democracy in, 24; England and, 647; equality in, 5*n*e, 873, 894; the family in, 1031*n*b, 1033*n*1, 1036; financial centralization in, 1209–10*n*d; girls in, 1043; immutability of the constitution in, 679–80*n*(L); industry in, 1235–37*n*y; inheritance laws in, 83–84, 84*n*a; judges in, 173; judicial powers in, 163–64*n*e, 170–71, 171–72nf, 173,

France (*continued*)
173*n*g, 1228–29*n*o, 1231*n*4; jury system in, 685–96*n*(C), 686; law of association in, 510*n*b; law of equal division in, 83–84; laws of succession in, 679–80*n*(L); liberty and, 894; as a maritime power, 647; material well-being in, 932–33*n*d; mayors in, 119; Middle Ages in, 798*n*d; monarchy in, 634, 679–80*n*(L), 1373–74; monuments in, 798*n*d; mores in, 1052*n*a, 1059–61, 1076*n*g; National Assembly of, 408, 415–16*n*x; national pride in, 1100*n*2, 1100*n*j, 1290–91*n,* 1291; newspapers in, 909; oligarchy of 1793, 360, 360*n*t; pantheism in, 757; *parlements* in, 163–64*n*e, 177–78, 679–80*n*(L), 680 (*see also Parlement de Paris*); parliamentary eloquence in, 869; patriotism in, 1100*n*2, 1100*n*j, 1290–91*n,* 1291; *pays d'États,* 195; philosophy in, 703–4*n*o; political history of, 6–10, 6*n*h; political jurisdiction in, 180–81, 182*n*c, 183; population of, 458–59, 605*n*65, 610*n*77; positions in, 1129*n*a; possession in North America, 650–51; prisons in, 409; privileges in, 1222; public expenditures in, 349–56, 353–54*nn*12–13; public works in, 1239–40*n*d; reelection in, 225*n*r; republican (*see also* the French Republic); salaries in, 1027; servant/master relationships in, 1007–8*n*b, 1010, 1010*n*f; sovereign courts in, 195; suicide in, 946; taxes in, 110; territory of, 595, 595*n*v; towns in, 119*n*f; transition from monarchical to republican, 1373–74; the United States and, 372–74*n*f; war and, 361; wars with England, 7*n*h, 9; women in, 1066. *See also* the French; French colonies; the French Republic; the French Revolution; July Revolution; the Restoration
Franklin, Benjamin, 137, 666–74*n*(F), 674, 683–84*n*(A), 684
Franklin, James, 683–84*n*(A), 684. *See also* Franklin, Benjamin
fraternity, cxlii
Frederick II, 1160*n*f
freedmen, 518, 550*n*f, 551, 553–54*n*o, 557*n*35, 565. *See also* emancipation
freedom of assembly, 304. *See also* freedom of association
freedom of association, 303–4, 308–9, 308*n*j, 899, 914, 914*n*1, 915, 915*n*d, 916–17; in England, 310; in Europe, 309–12; as a guarantee against tyranny of the majority, 307; in the United States, 302–12; universal suffrage and, 310–11. *See also* freedom of assembly
freedom of mind. *See* freedom of thought
freedom of the press, xxxli, xxvi, 303–5, 304–5, 306, 683–84*n*(A), 684, 1149, 1269–70. *See also* Franklin, Benjamin
freedom of the seas, 647
freedom of thought, xxvi, 298, 416–20, 709, 721–23*n*r, 724
freedom to write, xxvi. *See also* freedom of the press
free institutions, 887–94, 887*n*a, 1128, 1145*n*r, 1191–92*n*b, 1191–93, 1256–57*n*t. *See also* political institutions
freemasons, 285*n*f
free trade, lxxxii, 306
free will, 1251–52, 1259. *See also* will
the French, 50, 1344; absolute monarchy and, 632; Cartesian method and, 697–98*n*a; compared with Ameri-

cans, 737–41; French society, lxv; general ideas and, 726*n*a, 734, 737–41, 739*n*c; Indians and, 534*n*17, 534*n*s, 539–40*n*19, 650, 661–62*n*(D); Iroquois and, 661–62*n*(D); in the New World, 650–51; philosophy and, 739*n*c; political theory and, 737–41, 737*n*a; unions with Indians, 534*n*17. *See also* France; French Canadians
French Canadians, 462–63, 496, 632, 650–51
French colonies, 495, 1349, 1349*n*z. *See also* French settlements
French indemnities, 372–74*n*f
French language, 819–21*n*d
French literature, 800*n*a, 810–12*n*r
Frenchman's Island, 1302*n*h. *See also* *Journey to Lake Oneida*
the French Republic, 175*n*h, 177, 1373–75. *See also* France
the French Revolution, xlviii–xlix, lvi, cvi–cxvi, cxxvi*n*252, cxlii, 28*n*o, 163, 165, 189, 275, 620, 640, 690–91*n*c, 798*n*d, 822–23*n*f, 1060–61, 1100*n*j, 1119–20*n*h, 1222; centralization and, 678–79*n*(K); as a European event, cx, cx*n*197, cxi, cxii; intellectuals in, cxxvi*n*251; as a religious revolution, cxxvi*n*252; role of jurists in, 433, 433*n*h; understanding, cvi–cxvi; the United States and, 371
French settlements, 632. *See also* French colonies
French Society for the Abolition of Slavery, 561–62*n*t
the frontier, cxii–cxiii, cxiii*n*205, cxiv*n*211, cxv*n*216, 491–92, 492*n*6, 655–56, 658*n*(A). *See also* pioneers; the West; the wilderness
Frossard, Benjamin S., *La cause des esclaves nègres et des habitants de la Guinée, portée au tribunal de la justice, de la religion, de la politique,* 550*n*e, 561–62*n*t
Fulton, Julia, 489*n*[*], 1086*n*d
Furet, François, 10–12*n*q
fur traders, 1325
the future, 747*n*d, 965–68, 965*n*a, 965*n*b, 967, 968

Gallatin, L., 430*n*f, 1320
gambling, lxxxiii
game, 524–25, 525–26
Gargan, Edward, 869–70*n*h
Garret, Stephen A., 369*n*b
General Collection of the Laws of Massachusetts, 329*n*3–4, 662–65*n*(E), 685–96*n*(C), 686
general ideas, ciii, cxxiii, cxxiii*n*244, cxxv, cxxx, cxxxv, 3*n*a, 31, 31*n*t, 74r, 698–99a, 726–32*nn*a–g, 757*n*a; Americans and, 489, 726–32*nn*a–g, 726–41, 737–41, 739*n*c; aristocracy and, 726*n*a, 736; democracy and, 732*n*f, 738–39; the English and, 726, 729–32, 732*n*a, 734–35, 735*n*m; equality of conditions and, 717–18, 718*n*m, 720–21*n*p, 734, 737, 739*n*c; the French and, 726*n*a, 734, 737–41, 739*n*c; Germany and, 739*n*c; the human mind and, 739*n*c; in political matters, 737–41; in pre-Revolutionary France, 739*n*c; religion and, 748–49*n*f. *See also* philosophy
general interest, 918–25, 918*n*a
generative ideas, xxvi
Genêt, Edmond-Charles, 454
gentleman farmers, lxxxi
George, William H., 1268*n*o
Georgia, 271–72, 533*n*16, 596; act of cession by, 617*n*82; Blacks in, 569*n*45; commerce in, 607*n*70; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H);

Georgia (*continued*)
Indians in, 533*n*14, 540*n*20, 541*n*222; law of entail in, 675–76*n*(G); political jurisdiction in, 682*n*(N); population of, 610*n*77; refusal to obey Supreme Court, 590–91*n*t; slavery in, 548*n*c, 567; tariff laws and, 620–24
Georgin, René, 828*n*m
German Confederation, 592*n*55
German Empire, 147, 251, 253*n*36, 592*n*55. *See also* Germans; Germany
Germans, 253*n*36, 727–28*n*b, 739*n*c, 778–79*n*f. *See also* German Empire; Germany
Germany: general ideas and, 739*n*c; pantheism in, 757; women in, 1066*n*j. *See also* German Empire; Germans
Gersham, Sally, 561–62*n*t
Gibbon, Edward, 960–61*n*j
Gilman, Daniel C., 84*n*a
Gilpin, H. D., 621–22*n*v
girls, 1041–42*nn*a–c, 1041–51, 1044*n*f, 1048*n*a. *See also* women
Giroud, Vincent, xliv
glory, 781–82*n*j
Gobineau, Arthur de, 960–61*n*j
God, 726–27, 727–28*n*b, 740–41*n*d, 743, 744, 746–47, 747*n*d, 748–49*n*f, 749, 758, 838–39, 838*n*r, 839*n*s, 923–25*n*n, 927, 928*n*e
Gojat, Georges, 1268*n*o
gold seekers, 51–52
Goldstein, Doris S., 163, 163*n*c
good, 1094, 1095–96*n*e, 1114; public, 248–49*n*35. *See also* virtue
Goodwin, Isaac, *Town Officer,* 107*n*m, 107*n*6
Gookin, Daniel: *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England,* 42*n*15; on Indians, 666–74*n*(F), 669
Gorla, Gino, 430*n*f
the Gospel, 746
Gosselin, Charles, xxx*n*2, lxxxviii, xc*n*135, 29*n*p, 515*n*a
governance, wealth and, 974–76, 974*n*d
government, cxviii–cxvix, 6*n*h, 1197–98*n*j, 1197–99, 1199*n*m, 1204*n*f, 1214–15, 1214*n*n; aristocracy and, 1265–66*n*g; association and, 896, 898–901, 902*n*s, 903–4, 914, 914*n*1, 1278*n*a; centralization and (*see* administrative centralization; centralization); charitable establishments and, 1223; corruption in, 356–59; democracy and, 1265–66, 1265–66*n*g, 1265*n*e; education and, 1223; equality in, 6*n*h; industry and, 1237*n*z; material well-being and, 932–33*n*d; military, 1293*n*; mixed, 411–12; religion in, 1223–24; revolution and, 1214*n*n; varying the means of, 740–41*n*d; vices in, 356–59. *See also* public administration; *specific branches of government*
governmental centralization. *See* administrative centralization
Governors, 123, 123*n*21, 123*n*n, 137*n*y, 139–41, 140–42*n*b, 140*nn*47–48
grand juries, 128, 128*n*33
Grandmaison, Charles de, 810–12*n*r
gravity, 1080–81*nn*a–b, 1080–84
Gray, Francis, 442*n*w
the Great Century, 1133*n*c
Great Lakes, 33, 34
Greece, 732–33, 733*n*h, 815, 816*n*b, 847, 1065*n*h, 1143*n*n. *See also* Greeks
Greek, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 822–23*n*f, 824, 868*n*e
Greek drama, 847
Greek literature, 806–7*n*k, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 847
the Greeks, 253*n*36, 490, 509*n*a, 786–

87*n*p, 795*n*k, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 828*n*m. *See also* Greece
the Greeks, ancient, 940*n*e
Green-Bay, Wisconsin, 520*n*1
Greenwich, Connecticut, 796–97*n*b
Greg, William R., 221–22*n*p, 281–82*n*a, 656–57*n*h
grenadilla, 659*n*(B)
Grignan, Madame de, 992*n*1
Grimm, Friedrich M., *Nouveaux mémoires secrets et inédits historiques, politiques, anecdotiques et littéraires . . . ,* 850*n*f
Grund, Francis, 640*n*k
Guellec, Laurence, 828*n*m
Guermarquer, Madame (housekeeper), 1110–13*n*v
Guerry, lxxxvii–lxxxviii*n*125
Guinea, 576
Guizot, François, lvi, lxxxix, cxvi, cxviii, cxviii*n*221, cxix, cxix*n*226, cxxiv, cxxxv*n*283, cxlvii*n*319, 18*n*a, 896*n*c; democracy *vs.* representative government, 317*n*g; on democratic revolution, 18–19*n*a; on the federal system, 265*n*z; *Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe,* 265*n*z, 532*n*r; *Journal des cours publics de jurisprudence . . . ,* 93–94*n*e; "Of Religion in Modern Societies," 1124–25*n*p; representative system of, 412–13*n*s; in Tocqueville's work, 18–19*n*a
Gulf of Mexico, 597
Gulf states, 491, 575
Guyana, 495

habits, 50, 494, 692, 705–7, 1005–6, 1005*n*a, 1091–92*n*d
habitual relations, 995–98, 995–99, 995*n*ab, 995*nn*a–b, 998–99*n*e, 1005–6, 1005*n*a
half-breeds, 522*n*h, 533–34, 533*n*16, 534*n*17, 572, 1344, 1347, 1350–51. *See also bois-brûlé;* mulattos
Hall, Basil, xlii, lxiv, lxxxv*n*118, 382–83*n*j, 474*n*j, 802–3*n*d, 819–21*n*d, 1053*n*b, 1076*n*h
Hamburger, Joseph, 402*n*a
Hamilton, Alexander, 190*n*4, 192–93*nn*8, 247–48*n*35; on legislative instability, 323; on waning enthusiasm for American Revolution, 361; writings in *The Federalist,* 268, 274, 323, 361
Hamilton, Thomas, *Men and Manners in America,* 561–62*n*t
happiness: of Americans, 819–21*n*d; conjugal happiness, 819–21*n*d
Harrison, Katherine, 800–801*n*b
Hauranne, Duvergier de, lxxxiv–lxxxv
Haverford College, xlii, 548*n*c
Haxtahausen, Baron de, 656–57*n*h
Hazard, Ebenezer, *Historical Collection of State Papers and Other Authentic Documents,* 60–61*n*13, 666–74*n*(F)
Hebrew, 822–23*n*f
Heckewelder, R., 518*n*[*], 659–61*n*(C); *Letters of R. Hecwelder,* 42*n*16
Heine, Heinrich, lv, lv*n*46
Heliogabalus, cxxxii, 960–61*n*j
help, 904, 904*n*u
Helvetic confederation, 1180–81*n*c
Henderson, Christine, xxiv
Hennis, Wilhelm, 10–12*n*q, 712–13*n*c
Henri IV, 1246*n*c
Henrion, lx
Henry IV, 511
Henry VI, 684–85*n*(B)
Henry VIII, 681n(M)
hereditary rights, 770–71. *See also* inheritance laws

heresies, 7*n*h
highways, 118*n*14
Hindu culture, 102*n*g
historical change, cvii–cxi, cxiv–cxv, cxvii, cxviii
Historical Society of Pennsylvania, xlii
historiography, 854*n*d, 856*n*g; ancient, 857; aristocracy and, 853, 853*n*a, 854, 855, 855*n*f, 856, 857; democracy and, 853–60, 853*nn*a–b, 855*n*f. *See also* history
history, cxvi–cxx, cxviii, cxlviii–cxlvix; in America, cxiv, cxiv*n*209, cxiv*n*211, cxv*n*214; cycle of, cxviii–cxvix; equality and, cxviii; historical change, cvii–cxi, cxiv–cxv, cxvii, cxviii; inevitability of, cxvi; as struggle between the abstract and concrete, cxliii; teleology of, cxviii, cxxxiv; theory of, cxvi–cxx. *See also* historiography
Hobbes, Thomas, cxxxiii*n*275, 392, 392*n*w; *De Cive,* 392, 392*n*w; *Discours sur l'origine de l'égalité,* 392*n*w
Holland, 253*n*36, 592*n*55
Homer, 832*n*e
homicide, 1095
honor, lxix, 1093*nn*1–2, 1094*n*b, 1095*n*d, 1096*n*f, 1108*n*r, 1110–13*n*v, 1195*n*c; aristocracy and, 1093*n*a, 1096–1102, 1097–98*n*h, 1106–10, 1110–13*n*v, 1170–71*n*b, 1170–71*nn*b–c, 1174–75; democracy and, 1093–1115, 1093*n*a, 1097–98*n*h, 1106–10; equality and, 1113–15; in Europe, 1104; feudal, 1093*n*a, 1096–1102, 1106–10; inequality of conditions and, 1113–14*n*w, 1113–15; laws of, 1096*n*f, 1108; in the Middle Ages (*see* feudal honor); military, 1170–71*n*b, 1174–75; in the United States, 1093–1115, 1093*n*a; women and, 1110–13*n*v
Horwitz, Morton, 410*n*m
hospitals, 796–97*n*b
Hôtel de Rambouillet, 807*n*m
the House of Commons, political jurisdiction of, 180
the House of Lords, political jurisdiction of, 180, 180*n*1
the House of Representatives, 181, 196–200, 198*n*14, 199, 320*n*j, 459, 528–29*n*8; direct election of, 321; foreign affairs and, 372–74*n*f; legislation by, 200; political crimes and, 200; powers of, 200; qualifications to serve in, 249; role in election in case of no majority, 222; role in election in case of tie, 221; vulgarness of, 320–21. *See also* Congress; legislative power
houses of representatives (state), 136–38, 682*n*(N)
Hudson River, 52*n*5, 594
human actions, goals of, 965–68
human affairs, 837–38, 839*n*s, 840–42
human condition, 839*n*s
human destiny, 839*n*s, 841
human intelligence, 727–28*n*b, 728. *See also* the mind
the human race, 410, 747, 748, 837–38, 838*n*r
Hume, David, 960–61*n*j, 1110–13*n*v
humility, 1126, 1126*n*r
hunting, 1352–54
Hunt's Merchant Magazine, ciii–civ
Huron, 661–62*n*(D)
Huss, Jan, 7*n*h
Hutchison, Thomas, 61*n*16
Hutchison, Thomas, *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts,* 666–74*n*(F), 673

ideal types, 31*n*t
ideas, cxxiii, cxxxvi, 697–98*n*a, 895*n*a, 900–901, 1284–85*n*k; in America, cxiii–cxiv, cxiv*n*211; aristocracy and, cxx; as basis for unity, 598–99, 598–99*n*z, 598*n*y; circulation of, 887*n*c; communication of, cxl–cxli; democracy and, 900–901, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; dialectic of, cxl–cxlix; exchange of, cxl–cxli; fixed, 742*n*a, 743; generative, xxvi; historical change and, cvii–cxi; revolutionary, 1273–74; social state and, 748–49*n*f; society and, cvii–cxi, cviii*n*189, cviii*n*191, cix–cx; in the United States, cxxviii, cxxviii*n*256. *See also* democratic ideas; general ideas
identity, cxxxv
Illinois, 553–54*n*o, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
Illinois River, 35
imagination, 832, 835*n*j, 837
Imera, 1354
immigrants. *See* emigration
immobility, cxxxviii–cxxxix
immorality, 1290*n*
impressment, 361–62, 362*n*v, 362*n*u
indemnities affair, xlii, lxxxix, 30*n*s
independence, 881–82*n*b, 1193*n*c, 1205, 1250–51*n*j, 1258–61, 1259–60*n*w, 1259*n*v, 1269; enlightenment and, 1212*n*k; equality and, 1276–77, 1277*n*b; individual, 881–82*n*b, 1224, 1225–26*n*h, 1242*n*h; political, 1259–60*n*w; spirit of, 881–82*n*b
independence of thought, 422, 709, 721–23*n*r, 724–25, 735*n*m. *See also* freedom of thought
independent method, 698–99a
India, 102*n*g, 792*n*f
Indiana, 553–54*n*o, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
Indians, lxxii, lxxxii, cxv*n*212, 35, 39–40, 366, 456, 515–16, 515*n*a, 517, 520*n*1, 521, 522–47, 522*n*h, 523*n*2, 524*n*3, 535*n*t, 617, 1303–59, 1304–5*n*b, 1347; alcohol and, 1306–8; Americans and, 522–47, 539–40*n*19; Anglo-Americans and, 522–47, 539–40*n*19; attachment to their land, 525*n*6; Blacks and, 529*n*p; Canadians and, 1344; character of the, 41–42, 42*n*15, 43; civilization and, 530–41, 531–40, 531*n*12, 535*n*t, 536–37*n*18, 537–38*n*v; compared to Europeans of the Middle Ages, 532, 532*n*r; compared to Teutons, 532, 532*n*r; compared with nomadic tribes of Asia, 39–40*n*14; Congress and, 528–29*n*8, 529*n*9, 545–46; culture of, 531–32*n*13, 531*n*12, 532–33, 535*n*t, 539–40; decreasing numbers of, 1308; dependence on Europeans, 523–24, 524*n*3; destruction of, 43–44, 537–38*n*v, 539–40*n*19, 540, 540*n*20, 541, 550*n*d; disappearance of, 523–30, 525*nis,* 541; disappearance of resources, 523–26; dispossession of, 524–29; the English and, 534*n*17; English colonies and, 529*n*10; Enlightenment and, 535; equality of conditions among the, 40; Europeans and, 523–28, 527–28*n*7, 536–37*n*18, 537–38*n*v, 539–40, 539–40*n*19; famine and, 524–26; forced emigration of, 525–29, 542–47; the French and, 534*n*17, 534*n*s, 539–40*n*19, 650, 661–62*n*(D); French-speaking, 1344; game and, 524–26; history of, 43, 666–74*n*(F), 669; independence of, 519–20, 520*n*g; Indian women, 1304–5*n*b; land of, 618; languages of, 40, 659–61*n*(C); money and, 1335; in New England, 529*n*10; oppression of, 518–19, 540*n*20, 541–47, 542*n*x;

Indians (*continued*)
origin of the, 42*n*15, 43; physical description of, 1304–5*n*b, 1304–6; sense of time, 527–28*n*7, 530; social state of, 40; in the South, 541; Spanish and, 546–47, 546*n*28; states and, 541–47, 544–45*n*26, 544*n*25, 544*n*y; trade with, 1352; U.S. federal government and, 541–47, 542*n*24, 544–45*n*26, 544*n*25, 618; in Virginia, 529*n*10. *See also* half-breeds; savages; *specific tribes*
individual egoism, 881–82*n*b, 1222–23*n*1
individual independence, 881–82*n*b, 1224, 1225–26*n*h, 1242*n*h
individual interest, 128, 129
individualism, lxix, ci, cxxiv–cxxv, cxxxv, cxxxv*n*282, cxxxvii, cxli, 654*n*f, 708*n*t, 709–10*n*u, 881–82*n*b, 882*n*d, 1005–6, 1187–89*n*a, 1194*n*a, 1218–19*n*t, 1250*n*h, 1293–94*n*; collective, 881–82*n*b; democracy and, 697–98*n*a, 881–82*nn*a–b, 881–84, 883*n*e; despotism of, cxxxiii–cxxxix; doctrine of interest well understood and, 918–25, 918*n*a; equality and, 883; free institutions and, 887–94, 887*n*a; greater at the end of a democratic revolution, 885–86, 886*n*c; rational, cxxiv–cxxv, cxlii; in the United States, 887–94, 887*n*a, 918–25, 918*n*a. *See also* individuals
individualistic rationalism, cxxxiv, cxxxiv*n*279
individual power, 1223*n*d
individual rights, 1271–73, 1275–76, 1275–76*nn*x–y
individuals, 1258, 1259*n*v; judgment of oneself, 108; obedience of, 108; rights of, 1271–73; society and, 1271–76, 1276*n*z. *See also* individualism
individual strength, 881–82*n*b
industrialists, 1232–33*n*v, 1234–35*n*5, 1234–40, 1235–37*nn*y–z
industrialization, lxix, xcvii*n*158, 981*n*c
industrial products, 1232, 1232*n*t
industrial professions, 972–79, 972*nn*a–b, 973*n*1, 974*n*d, 977–79*n*j, 977*n*g, 989*n*d
industrial property, 1233–34, 1233*n*v, 1235–37*n*y, 1266*n*h
industry, lxxxiii, 81*n*s, 614, 642, 784–85, 1025–30, 1027*n*d, 1103–5, 1129–32, 1129*n*a; aristocracy and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 978–79*n*j, 980–81*nn*a–b, 980–85, 1026, 1028–29*n*g, 1028*n*d, 1286–87*n*; associations and, 1238–39, 1238*n*c; careers in, 1129–32, 1131*n*e; centralization and, 1231–41, 1231*n*r, 1235–37*n*y, 1239–40*n*d; democracy and, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 977–78*n*h, 978–79*n*j, 1028–29*n*g; development of, 1231–41, 1231*n*r, 1232–33*n*u, 1237–38*n*a; in England, 1235–37*n*y; equality and, 980–81*nn*a–b, 1231, 1241, 1241*n*e; in France, 1235–37*n*y; government and, 1237*n*z; liberty and, 948–50*n*c; in the Middle Ages, 1233; in the North, 560, 607; property and, 1232, 1232*n*t; revolution and, 1138; in the United States, 1103–5, 1129*n*a
inequality, cxlvi*n*317, 561, 731, 1202; Blacks and, 550*n*f, 551–55, 551*n*32, 551*n*g; hatred of, 1203*n*d; honor and, 1113–14*n*w, 1113–15. *See also* equality
inequality of conditions. *See* inequality
infrastructure. *See* public works
Ingersoll, Charles J., 304*n*e
inheritance laws, 78–79*n*o, 78–85, 79–80*n*1, 81*n*s, 94, 675–76*n*(G), 1263–64*n*c; effects in the United States,

80–85, 82*n*v; enlightenment and, 770–71, 772; in France, 83–84, 84*n*a; slavery and, 563–64; in the South, 563–64
inheritances, lxxxiii, 6, 51, 78. *See also* inheritance laws
the Inquisition, 419
inspectors, 107
instability, cxl–cxli
instincts, 692
Institut Français, xxxii*n*5
Institutions et mœurs américaines, lxxiv
instruction. *See* education; enlightenment
intellectual centralization, 1223*n*f
intellectual education, 1369–72
intellectual equality, 455, 490, 702*n*m
intellectual liberty, 709, 721–23*n*r, 724. *See also* freedom of thought
intelligence, 727–28*n*b, 765–66*n*e; division of labor and, 642–43, 642–43*n*m; gender and, 727–28*n*b; as a social force, 7
interest, lxvii, lxix, cxxxv, cxxxvi, cxxxviii, cxlv, 365, 708–9, 921*n*j; common, 923*n*m; democracy and, 918–25, 923*n*m; diverse, lxxxii; individual, 128, 129; merging of general with particular, 21; national, 923*n*m; preoccupation with, cxxxviii–cxxxix. *See also* interest well understood, doctrine of; well-being
interest on money, lxxxiii
interest well understood, doctrine of, xxvi, 918–25; aristocracy and, 920, 920*n*g; democracy and, 919*n*f, 920, 920*n*g; individualism and, 918–25, 918*n*a; in the United States, 918–25, 918*n*a, 926–29, 926*n*a. *See also* interest; well-being
intermediary powers, 1197, 1205. *See also* secondary power
interracial marriage, 553–54*n*o, 555
interstate commerce, 614
Ireland, xciv*n*152, xcix, 82*n*v, 468
the Irish, xcix
iron, 1235–37*n*y
Iroquois, 42*n*15, 661–62*n*(D), 1304, 1306
Iroquois Confederation, 1304, 1306
irreligion, 1290*n*. *See also* unbelief
Irving, Washington, 388*n*s, 802–3*n*d, 803–4*n,* 804*n*h, 805, 810*n*p
Isabella, Queen, 287*n*h
Islam, 158, 158*n*y, 746, 747*n*e. *See also* Moslems
isolation, 883*n*e, 884, 887–88, 887*n*a, 888*n*e
Italy, 822, 1143*n*n

Jackson, Andrew, 214, 215–17*n*m, 292, 372–74*n*f, 453–54, 454*n*[*], 624–26, 625*n*w
Jacobites, lxxvii*n*101
the Jacquerie, 7*n*h
Janara, Lara, 1031*n*b
Jardin, André, xxxiii*n*10, lxx–lxxi*n*85, 10–12*n*q, 270–71*n*b, 1299*n*f, 1314*n*j
jargon, 807, 807*n*m, 822
Jay, John, 192–93*nn*8
jealousy, 1187–89*n*a, 1203–4, 1203*n*d
Jean, King, 24*n*g
Jefferson, Thomas, lxxxii, 42*n*16, 213, 222, 257*n*o, 540*n*w, 609*n*75, 675–76*n*(G); election of, 221*n*23; on emancipation, 570*n*x; on foreign policy, 367, 368, 368[*]; on legislative instability, 323; letter to Madison, 678–79*n*(K), 679; *Mémoires de Jefferson,* 556*n*33, 572*n*46, 675–76*n*(G); *Notes sur la Virginie,* 42*n*15, 42*n*16; presidency of, 283–84; on tyranny of the majority, 426, 426*n*h; on War of 1812, 591*n*53
Jemmings, Nicholas, 63*n*20

Jerome, Saint, cxxxii, 960–61*n*j
Jesuits, 530
Jesus Christ, 707–8*n*s, 733, 733*n*h
Jews, 6*n*h, 9, 1060*n*j, 1263–64*n*c
Jocelyn, 834*n*h, 841
Jourdain, M., 810–12*n*r
Journal des débats, xc, xcii–xciii, 121*n*h, 763*n*a, 1209–10*n*d, 1226–27*n*k
journalism, 805
Journey of Long, 543*n*[*]
Journey to Lake Oneida, 1295–1302, 1295*n*a
judges, 170, 444*n*4, 445, 447–50, 449*n*y; of district courts, 233*n*26–27; federal, 245–46; in France, 170–71, 171–72nf, 173; of the Supreme Court, 233–34, 233*n*26–27; in the United States, 171–72nf, 173, 174–78. *See also* judicial power
judgment, 93–94*n*e, 697–710, 716*n*h, 719
judicial powers, 120*n*g, 122, 163–64*n*e, 167*n*a, 167*n*b, 168*n*c, 229–50, 441, 466, 682*n*(N), 1204*n*f, 1228–29*n*o, 1230–31*n*p, 1235–37*n*y; administrative decentralization and, 175*n*j; as democratic instrument of liberty, 1270; dependency on legislative powers, 411*n*o; elective power and, 122; in England, 172–73; in Europe, 1228–30; force and, 231–32*n*z; in France, 163–64*n*e, 170–71, 171–72nf, 173, 173*n*g, 1228–29*n*o, 1231*n*4; influence on the power of the majority, 430–42, 430*n*f, 433*n*g, 434*n*m, 435*n*n, 435*n*r; the majority and, 404, 404*n*e; opinion and, 231; political society and, 167–78; the press and, 1269–70; as the second guarantee of liberty, 436*n*o; in the states, 250; in the United States, 167–78, 171–72nf, 175*n*j; in the U.S. constitution, 441*n*v. *See also* courts; judicial system; political jurisdiction; Supreme Court
judicial system, xxvii, 244, 245. *See also* courts; judges; judicial powers; jury system
jugement politique (political judgment), 179*n*4. *See also* political jurisdiction
July Monarchy, lxxv–lxxvi
July Revolution, lii*n*35, liii, lvi–lxiv, lviii*n*51, lxxv–lxxvii, lxxvii*n*101, 679–80*n*(L), 1156–57*nn*d, 1358–59, 1373
juries, lxxxiii, 233*n*26–27, 329, 682*n*(N); grand juries, 128, 128*n*33
jurisdiction, lxxxii, 682*n*(N)
jurists, 6*n*h, 7; American, 430–42; aristocracy and, 434–37, 439, 439*n*r; aristocratic character of, 433–37, 439, 439*n*r; as a counterweight to democracy, 430–42, 430*n*f, 433*n*g, 434*n*m, 435*n*n, 435*n*r; English, 432, 437–38; in Europe, 431–32; executive powers and, 435, 435*n*n; French, 432, 437–38; kings and, 435, 435*n*n, 436; revolution and, 433; role in the French Revolution, 433, 433*n*h
jury systems: Blacks and, 553–54*n*o, 554; in England, 684–85*n*(B), 686–87*n*(D); English, 443, 443*n*2, 445; in Europe, 446; in France, 443*n*2, 446, 685–96*n*(C), 686; influence on national character, 447–48; in Louisiana, 443*n*2; in New York, 685–96*n*(C); in Ohio, 685–96*n*(C); as a political institution, 442–50, 442*n*w, 443–45*nn*2–5; in the United States, 442–50, 685–96*n*(C); U.S. Constitution and, 685–96*n*(C)
juste milieu, cxxxii
justice, xxvii, 410, 1095–96*n*e
justices of the peace, 119*n*17, 122–24, 123*n*23, 124*n*25, 132*n*s, 133

Kempis, Thomas, *Imitation of Christ,* 1115*n*y
Kennerly, 542*n*23
Kent, James, 84*n*a; *Commentaries on American Law,* 207*n*17, 235–36*n*27, 275*n*41, 317–18, 372–74*n*f, 460, 553–54*n*o, 556*n*33, 675–76*n*(G)
Kentucky, 557, 558*n*36, 558*n*r; Constitution of, 481*n*5; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); growth of, 558; law of entail in, 675–76*n*(G); political jurisdiction in, 682*n*(N); population of, 558, 558*n*27, 652; slavery in, 558–61
Kergorlay, Louis de, xxx, xxxiv*n*15, lii–liii, lix, lxix–lxx, lxxi*n*86, lxxv, lxxxvii, xciii, xcix, ci, cii, cii*n*170, cii*n*172, cxli, cxli*n,* 3*n*b, 40*n*k, 76*n*f, 78–79*n*o, 88*n*g, 145–46*n*g, 158–59*n*y, 317*n*g, 345*n*a, 515*n*a, 697–98*n*a, 699–700*n*e, 777*n*d, 786–87*n*p, 786*n*o, 872*n*a, 881–82*n*b, 903*n*t, 941*ng,* 963*n*b, 972*n*b, 1019*n*o, 1082*n*e, 1110–13*n*v, 1116–17*n*b, 1214*n*n, 1270*n*r, 1281*n*e; commentaries of, 14–15*nu,* 500*n*n, 502*n*q, 502*n*r, 1156–57*nn*d; criticisms of, 5*n*e
kings, 6*n*h, 7, 8, 19–20, 435, 435*n*n, 436. *See also* monarchy
knowledge, xxvii, cxxxv, 7, 490–91, 490*n*z, 491–94, 700*n*j
the Koran, 746, 810–12*n*r
Kummings, Donald D., 800–801*n*b

labor, 639*n*94, 642–43, 642–43*n*m, 1321–22. *See also* professions; work; workers; working classes
La Bruyère, Jean, 158–59*n*y, 419, 996*n*c; *Les Caractères,* 1072–73*n*c; *Lettres persanes,* 1072–73*n*c
Lacordaire, Abbé, 1223*n*f
La Croix de Watines family, 1299*n*f
Lafayette, Clémentine de, ci, 349–50*n*j, 591*n*53; *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits du général Lafayette,* 856, 856*n*h
Lafayette family, lv
La Harpe, 810–12*n*r, 827–28*n*k
Laine, M., 402*n*a
Lake Erie, 1308, 1312
Lake Huron, 1346*n*y
Lake Michgan, 1313–14*n*h
Lake Oneida, 1295–1302
Lamard, Major, 520*n*1, 520*n*f
Lamartine, Alphonse de, 747*n*e
Lamberti, Jean-Claude, 881–82*n*b, 915*n*d
land, lxxxii, 6, 78–79*n*o, 78–85, 83*n*3, 617–18, 618*n*6, 1321–22
landed property. *See* land; property
Lange, Victor, 1297–98*n*c
language, 819–21*n*d, 826*n*h; abstract, 827–28*n*k, 827–29; American propensity for neologisms, 819–21*n*d; aristocracy and, 822, 825–26, 828*n*m; class and, 825–27; dead *vs.* living languages, 824; democracy and, 822–25, 826*n*h, 839–40; equality and, 825, 826*n*h, 827*n*j; figurative, 819–21*n*d, 825; foreign words, 819–21*n*d; general, 827–28*n*k, 827–29; Indian languages, 40, 659–61*n*(C); languages of North America, 659–61*n*(C); the majority and, 823–24; parliamentary eloquence, 861–70; *patois,* 826, 826*n*h; political institutions and, 829; of the pulpit, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; social state and, 818–29, 819*n*c, 826; spoken *vs.* written, 819. *See also* jargon; *specific languages*
La Nouvelle Orléans, 650. *See also* New Orleans

la Roche, Sophie von, *Erscheinungen am See Oneida,* 1297–98, 1297–98*n*c, 1302*n*j
Laski, Harold, 76*n*f
Latin, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 822–23*n*f, 824, 868*n*e
Latin drama, 847
Latin literature, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 847
Latrobe, John, 82*n*u, 430*n*f, 563*n*u, 614*n*k
Lausanne, library of the *canton* and university of, xlii
Lawler, Peter, xxiv
law-makers, xxvii
laws, cxliv*n*310, 46*n*b, 187–88, 451–52*n*d, 506, 690, 1072–73*n*c; agrarian, 1136*n*e; Anglo-American, 62–65, 67, 69, 71–73; of association, 510*n*b; beneficial tendency of, 377–84; character and, 987–88*n*b; civil, lxxxiii, 7, 72–73, 1275–76*n*y; commercial, lxxxiii; common, lxxxii; constitutionality of, 170–75, 171–72nf, 175; contract, 240; contract law, 240*n*31; criminal, lxxxiii, 62–64, 240; defectiveness of, 378–79*n*e; democracy and, 377–84, 494–504, 512–13, 512*n*m, 512*n*n; electoral, 322–23; English, 675–76*n*(G); of entail, 84, 85–86*n*e, 675–76*n*(G); of equal division, 80–85, 82*n*v, 83; equality of conditions and, 4; of exclusive privileges, 6*n*h; federal, 231, 231*n*25, 497; French, 679–80*n*(L); general, 1094, 1094*n*c; of honor, 1096*n*f, 1108; influence on maintaining the democratic republic in the United States, 465–66; of inheritance, 78–79*n*o, 78–85, 79–80*n*1, 81*n*s, 82*n*v, 84*n*a, 85–86*n*e, 94, 459, 675–76*n*(G), 770–71, 772, 1263–64*n*c; interpretation of, 244; jurists as a counterweight to tyranny of the majority, 430–42; maintenance of the democratic republic and, 494–500; the majority and, 721–23*n*r; of Mexico, 497, 497*n*h; mobile character of, lxxxi; mores and, cix*n*195; of nations, 244, 1183; of New England, 63–64*n*25, 63–65, 64*n*26; in the Northeast, 497–98; obedience to, lxxxi; organic law of 1789, 235–36*n*27; against particular sects, 63–64, 63–64*n*25, 64*n*26; patriotism and, 160; penal, lxxxiii, 62–64, 240; political, 721; Poor Law, 1200*n*a; primogeniture, 81–82, 85–86*n*e, 459; on property division, 459; against rape, 1066; respect for, 393–95; of science, 775–76*n*c, 777–78*n*e; tariff laws, 620–24; that counter democracy's tendency toward mediocre leadership, 320–21; in the United States, 117–18, 500–504; unjust, 410; weakness of, 377, 377*n*d. *See also* federal laws; legislative instability; state laws; specific countries and states
Laws of Massachusetts, 322–23*n*o, 553–54*n*o
Laws of the United States, 235–36*n*27
Lawson, John, *The History of the Carolinas,* 42*n*16, 666–74*n*(F), 668
lawyers, lxxxiii
learning, xxvii. *See also* education
leases, 1020–24, 1020*n*a, 1021*n*ab, 1023*n*d
Leclercq, Jean-Michel, 650*n*d
legislation, uniform, 1195, 1197–99, 1199*n*m
Legislative Documents, 20th Congress, 533*n*14, 540*n*20, 613*n*80

Legislative Documents, 21st Congress, 544–45*n*26
Legislative Documents, 22nd Congress, 620*n*85
legislative instability, cxl, 139*n*z, 322–23, 322–23*n*o, 332*n*c, 407–9, 408*n*2, 634
legislative powers, cxlvii, 196–200, 411*n*o, 626–27; concentration of, 137*n*y, 249–50; danger of subservience to will of electoral body, 248–49; difference between Senate and House of Representatives, 196–200; division of, 136–38; executive power and, 206–7, 210–11, 215–16, 215–17*n*m; the majority and, 403–4, 403*n*1, 403*n*b; in the states, 247–49. *See also* Congress; the House of Representatives; the Senate
legislative tyranny, 185
legislators, xxvii, 248
legislatures, 1256–57*n*t; aristocracy and, 861–70, 861*n*a, 862–64; democracy and, 861–70, 861*n*a, 864–65*n*d, 864*n*c, 866*n*[*]; federal legislature, 248–49; the majority and, 403–4; parliamentary eloquence, 861–70, 861*nn*a–b; state legislatures, 248–49. *See also* legislative powers; *specific legislative bodies*
Le Havre, 639, 1365*n*b
Lenape language, 659–61*n*(C)
Lenapes (Delawares), 522–23
Lepage-Dupratz, Antoine Simon, *Histoire de la Louisiane,* 42*n*16
Lescallier, Daniel, *Réflexions sur le sort des noirs dans nos colonies,* 550*n*e
Lesueur, Abbé, l–li, li–lii*n*34, li*n*32, lii
Lettres édifiants, 530*n*11
leveling, 7–9. *See also* equality
Liancourt, lxxiii
liberalism, cvi, cxlvi
liberals, cxvi
Liberia, 576*n*d, 577
Liberia Herald, 576*n*d
liberty, lxxv–lxxvi, cvi, cviii, cviii*n*190, cix, cxvi–cxix, cxix*n*227, cxxvi, cxxxvi*n*287, cxl*n*299, cxlii–cxliv, cxlii*n*303, cxliii*n*305, cxliii*n*306, cxliv*n*310, cxlv*n*315, cxlviii, 15–16*n*w, 25, 117, 162, 163, 506, 512*n*h, 519, 550, 715, 716, 769–70*n*g, 770, 772*n*j, 890, 895–96, 950, 1187–89*n*a, 1191–92*n*b, 1200*n*a, 1205, 1206–7*n*a, 1207–8*n*b, 1215*n*p, 1220*n*u, 1230–31*n*p, 1244, 1249*n*f, 1256*n*r, 1259–60*n*w, 1263, 1271, 1271*n*s, 1272*n*t, 1276–77, 1277*n*c, 1277*n*b, 1283*n*h, 1284*n*j, 1285; administrative power and, 1228–29*n*o; in America, 89, 948–53, 948*n*a; in antiquity, 732–33; aristocracy and, 307*n*h, 885*n*b, 1212, 1263–64, 1263–64*n*c; authority and, 724–25, 724*n*s; barbaric (antisocial), cxix*n*226; centralization and, 1241; Christianity and, 468; commerce and, 948–50*n*c; definition of, 68–69; democracy and, 163–64*n*e, 872–74*nn*a–c, 872–80, 1263–64, 1266–67*n*j, 1267*n*k; democratic, 689–90*n*a; despotism and, 887*n*a, 888*n*e, 889*n*f, 1161–62, 1161–62*n*j; in the English colonies, 60; equality and, cxix, 875*n*d, 877–88*n*e, 893–94, 1262*n*a, 1278*n*a; in Europe, 68, 877, 1208–9; as the first good, 3*n*a; France and, 894; as independence of the individual, cxix*n*226; industry and, 948–50*n*c; intellectual, 709; love of, 455, 872–74*nn*a–c, 872–80, 948–53, 948*n*a; material enjoyments and, 948–53, 948*n*a; material well-being and, 948–50*n*c, 948*n*a; moral, cxix*n*226; natural, cxix*n*226; in New

liberty (*continued*)
England, 60; in the New World, 51; as a passion, cxliii; political, 775–76*n*b, 778–79*n*f; the press and, 1269–70; privilege and, 1263–64, 1263–64*n*c; provincial institutions and, 162, 162*n*b, 165; religion and, cxxx, 26, 69–70, 475–79, 479*n*q, 712–13*n*c, 745; republican, 628–29*n*z; by right, cxix*n*226; servitude and, 1259–60*n*w, 1259–61; in small nations, 255–56; town institutions and, 162*n*b; town liberty, 101–3, 101*n*d, 109; in the United States, 1208–9; varieties of, cxix, cxix*n*225, cxix*n*226; virtue and, 509, 509*n*a. *See also* emancipation; *specific freedoms*
Liberty Fund, xxiv
license, 1277*n*c, 1293–94*n*. *See also* vice
licenses, 125*n*26
Lieber, Francis, 186–87*n*a
Lieberson, Harry, 522*n*h
Lingard, John, lvi
Lingard, John, *History of England,* 1178*n*a
Lippitt, Francis, lxxxvii, 84*n*a
literature, cii, 6–7*n*h, 7, 9, 810–12*n*r; in America, 489, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 784*n*n, 800–812, 800*n*a, 802–3*n*d, 803*n*e, 804*n*h, 813–14, 814*n*d; ancient *vs.* modern, 806–7*n*k; aristocracy and, 800*n*a, 805–6, 807, 807*n*1, 809*n*o, 810, 810*n*p, 810*n*q, 813, 814*n*e, 815; classics, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17; democracy and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 769–70*n*g, 800–804*nn*a–h, 800–812, 801–2*n*c, 808–9, 809–12*nn*o–r, 810*n*q, 813–14, 813*n*a; England and, 763–64*n*b; English, 800*n*a; equality and, 763–64*n*b, 764–65, 800–801*n*b; Europe and, 763–64*n*b; French, 800*n*a, 810–12*n*r; Latin, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 847; literary industry, 813–14, 813*n*a, 814*n*d; literary market, 813–14, 813*n*a; literary physiognomy, 800–812, 845–46*n*b; literary revolution, 845–46*nn*a–b, 846; modern literature compared to ancient, 806–7*n*k; political constitution and, 812; revolutions and, 846; social state and, 812; style and, 810–12*n*r. *See also* poetry; *specific literatures*
Liverpool, England, 639
Livingston, Edward, 30*n*2, 30*n*s, 72*n*c, 82*n*t, 84*n*a, 167*n*a, 198*n*u, 342*n*v, 372–74*n*f, 802–3*n*d
Livingston family, 85*n*b
Logan, James [sometimes also John], 540*n*w
log houses, 1287–88*n,* 1288, 1311, 1316–17, 1329, 1333, 1341, 1346
London and Paris Courier, xci
London and Westminster Review, ci*n*168
Long, Major, *Long's Expedition,* 542*n*[*], 658*n*(A)
Lope de Vega y Carpio, Félix, 850, 850*n*g
Louisiana, 453–54, 453*n*f, 539–40*n*19, 567, 650; Constitution of, 481*n*5; cultivation of sugar cane in, 559*n*38; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); jury system in, 443*n*2, 685–96*n*(C); political jurisdiction in, 682*n*(N); slavery in, 559*n*38
Louis-Napoléon, *coup d'état* of, 225*n*r
Louis-Philippe, lix, lxiv, 435*n*n
Louis XI, 7*n*h, 8
Louis XIV, 8, 144–45, 275, 415–16*n*x, 419, 511, 534*n*17, 634, 635, 678–79*n*(K), 679, 810–12*n*r, 828, 830*n*a, 849, 849*n*d, 1058*n*g, 1110–13*n*v, 1160*n*f, 1246*n*c, 1290–91*n,* 1291

Louis XV, 8, 721–23*n*r, 810–12*n*r
Louis XVI, 8*n*n, 678–79*n*(K)
Louis XVIII, 679–80*n*(L)
love, 1054–55, 1054–55*n*1, 1058*n*g
lower classes, 333–40, 363, 754*n*b. *See also* the poor
Lutheranism, 1351
Luther, Martin, 704, 705*n*q, 822–23*n*f, 1146
Lyceums, lxxxiii

Macarel, 99–100*n*c
Machiavelli, Niccolò, 810–12*n*r; *History of Florence,* 822–23*n*f, 948–50*n*c; *The Prince,* 822–23*n*f, 1182, 1182*n*e
MacLean, Mr., 263*n*y, 404*n*e
Madison, James, cxxxvii*n*288, 190*n*4, 192–93*nn*8, 609*n*75; *The Federalist,* 323, 428–29*n*d; on legislative instability, 323, 332*n*c; on tyranny of the majority, 425, 428–29*n*d; writings in *The Federalist,* 425–26
magistrates. *See* public officials
Maine, 52*n*5, 271–72, 569, 652, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
the majority, cxxx*n*264, cxxxiv, 104, 304–5, 336, 403*nb,* 406*n*g, 621, 719–20, 752; despotism of, 249, 721–23*n*r, 724–25; dominion of, cxxxi*n*270, 404–7, 406*n*g, 720–21*n*p, 753, 901*n*o; equality of conditions and, 720–21*n*p; influence of juridical powers on, 430–42, 430*n*f, 433*n*g, 434*n*m, 435*n*n, 435*n*r; language and, 823–24; laws and the, 378; legislatures and, 403–4; moral power of, 720–21*n*p, 1185; omnipotence of, 402–26, 407–9, 1266–67*n*j; opinions of, 719–20, 1142–43 (*see also* public opinion); political association and, 308, 310, 311–12; power of, 403–4, 403*nb,* 416–20, 720–25, 721–23*n*r, 1185; public officials and, 415–16, 415–16*n*x; religion and, cxxx, 721–23*n*r, 752*n*j; rule of, 278, 628–29*n*z, 630–31, 711–12*n*b; sovereignty of, 721; stubbornness of, lxxxii; tyranny of, lxxxi, cxxxvi, cxxxvii–cxxxviii, cxxxvii*n*288, cxlvii, 307, 311–12, 402*n*a, 406*n*g, 410–15, 411*n*3, 412–13*n*s, 413*n*t, 414*n*4, 415*n*w, 416–20, 416–50, 427*n*a, 428–29*n*d, 466. *See also* public opinion
Malesherbes, Chrétien Guillaume Lamoignon de (maternal grandfather of Tocqueville), xlix, xlix*n*25, l, l*n*28, lv, cxlviii, 291*n*e, 417, 679*n*g; *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du droit public de la France en matière d'impôts,* 678–79*n*(K)
Malesherbes, Marguerite de Lamoignon de (maternal grandmother of Tocqueville), xlix
Malte-Brun, Conrad, 595*n*v, 605*n*65
man: equality and, 759*n*b; history and, cxvi, cxviii; miseries of, 840–41*n*v; nature and, cxv, cxv*n*216 (*see also* frontier); perfectibility of, 705–7*n*r, 759–62, 759*n*a, 759*n*b, 760; society and, cxvi. *See also* the human race; individuals
Mandar, Théophile, *Discours sur le commerce et l'esclavage des nègres,* 550*n*e
mandates, xxxli, 1197
Manent, Pierre, xxiv
manners, cii*n*172, 1071–79, 1072–73*n*c; American, 1005–6, 1005*n*a, 1071–79, 1072–73*n*c; aristocratic, 1000–1001, 1000*n*a, 1071*n*a, 1074–75*n*f, 1076–79, 1079*n*m; democratic, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1071–74*nn*a–d, 1071–79, 1072–73*n*c, 1074–75*n*f, 1074*n*d,

manners (*continued*)
1077*n*j, 1078–79*nn*k–m; European, 1072–73*n*c, 1079*n*m; French, 1079*n*m; of the rich, 1078*n*k
manufacturing aristocracy, 81*n*s, 85*n*d
Maréchal de France, 1155–56*n*c
Marie, ou l'esclavage aux États-Unis, xxxiii, xxxvii, lxiii, lxxxv–lxxxvi, lxxxv–lxxxvi*n*120, lxxxvi–lxxxvii*n*122, lxxxvi*n*121, lxxxviii*n*127, xcii–xciii, xcii*n*144, xcix, cxxxii–cxxxiii*n*273, 29*n*1, 29*n*r, 81*n*s, 402*n*a, 428*n*c, 515*n*a, 537–38*n*v, 769–70*n*g, 776–77*n*c, 801–2*n*c, 1295*n*a; American literature in, 802–3*n*d; as a collaborative effort, lxxxv–lxxxvi, lxxxv–lxxxvi*n*120; duelling in, 1109*n*s; editions of, xcii*n*144; education of young girls and, 1041*n*a; emancipation in, 570*n*x; equality in, cxxxii–cxxxiii*n*273; Indians in, 522*n*h; reception of, xcii–xciii, xcix; similarities to Atala, lxxxvi*n*121; similarities to Chateaubriand, lxxxvi–lxxxvii*n*122; slavery in, 561–62*n*t; writing of, lxxxv
maringouin, 1345
marital authority, 1062*n*a, 1064–65
maritime commerce, lxxxii, 596; American genius for, 638–41, 638–42, 644; federal jurisdiction over, 238; Supreme Court and, 244; between the United States and Europe, 638–40, 638*n*91, 639*n*92, 639*n*93
maritime war, 682–83*n*(O)
Marrast, 137–38*n*z
marriage, 473–74, 819–21*n*d, 1062*n*a, 1064–65, 1066, 1104, 1110–13*n*v; aristocracy and, 1055, 1056–57; democracy and, 1054–55*n*1, 1054–57; in Europe, 474; interracial, 553–54*n*o, 555; marital authority, 1062*n*a, 1064–65; in the United States, 473–74, 1048–51, 1048*n*a; women and, 1048–51, 1048*n*a, 1054–55*n*1, 1054–57
Marshall, John, *Life of Washington (Vie de Washington),* 371*n*17
Marshals of France, 1110–13*n*v
Marx, Karl, cxviii
Maryland, 60*n*12, 95, 95*n*1, 414*n*4; Blacks in, 569, 569*n*45; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); slavery in, 562, 562*n*39; universal suffrage in, 95
Mass, 859–60*n*m
Massachusetts, 52*n*5, 118*n*14, 129*n*36, 306, 490, 596; abolition in, 553–54*n*o; administrative centralization in, 135*n*32; administrative power in, 118–19; armed forces in, 151*n*[*]; Blacks in, 569; commerce in, 607*n*70; Constitution of, 139*n*[*]; counties in, 114–15, 119*n*19; court of common pleas in, 124*n*24; court of sessions in, 124–25; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); histories of, 666–74*n*(F), 673; interracial marriage prohibited in, 553–54*n*o; justices of the peace in, 123; laws of, 61*n*16, 63–64*n*25, 64*n*26, 553–54*n*o, 662–65*n*(E), 683–84*n*(A); legislative instability in, 322–23*n*o, 408*n*2; newspapers in, 683–84*n*(A); penal laws in, 63–64*n*25, 64*n*26; political jurisdiction in, 184, 184*n*d, 682*n*(N); population of, 459; public administration in, 131; senate in, 136*n*45; social charter in, 61; supreme judicial court in, 124*n*24; towns in, 103*n*1, 104*n*3; War of 1812 and, 274
Massachusetts Historical Society, xlii
Massillon, 721–23*n*r
masters: servants and, 1007–8*nn*a–b,

1007–19; workers and, 1025–26*n*a–b, 1025–30
material enjoyments, lxix, 697–98*n*a, 763–64*n*b, 765–66*n*e, 767, 781*n*h, 930–31*nn*a–b, 930–34, 972–73, 972*n*a, 973*n*1, 1187–89*n*a, 1194*n*a, 1218–19*n*t, 1291–92*n*; Americans and, 943*nn*c–d, 948–53, 948*n*a; aristocracy and, 935*n*a, 936, 936*n*c; democracy and, 935–36*nn*a–b, 935–38, 937*n*e, 965*n*b; equality and, 938; liberty and, 948–53, 948*n*a; public affairs and, 948–53, 948*n*a; restlessness and, 942–47, 942–48, 942*n*a, 947*n*k. *See also* material well-being
materialism, cxlv–cxlvi*n*315, 763–64*n*b, 942–47, 943*nn*c–d, 956–59, 956*n*d, 957*n*e, 960–61*n*j; democracy and, 962*n*n. *See also* material enjoyments; material well-being; wealth
material well-being, 463–65, 781–82*n*j, 973*n*1, 1187–89*n*a, 1291–92*n*; aristocracy and, 932–33*n*d, 935–36*nn*a–b, 936–37, 937*n*d; dangers of excessive love of, 963–64; democracy and, 930–34, 932–33*n*d, 934*n*g, 954, 954*n*a; equality and, 944–45, 1253–54*n*o; in Europe, 931, 932–33*n*d; in France, 932–33*n*d; liberty and, 948–50*n*c, 948*n*a; religion and, 954–62, 954*n*a; restlessness and, 942–48, 942*n*a; science and, 786–87*n*p; servitude and, 1228*n*3; taste for, 930–31*nn*a–b, 930–34, 963–64; in the United States, 932–33*n*d. *See also* material enjoyments; well-being
Mather, Cotton, *Magnalia Christi Americana, or the ecclesiastical history of New England,* 68*n*41, 666–74*n*(F), 669–73
Matteucci, Nicola, 282–83*n*b
Maupeou, 679–80*n*(L), 680
mayors (French), 119
McCoy, 542*n*23
McInnis, Edgar, 650*n*d
McLemore, Richard A., 30*n*s
Meaux, bishop of, cxviii
Medicis, 948–50*n*c
meditation, 775–76*n*b, 779–81
melancholy, 1082*n*e
Mélonio, Françoise, 800–801*n*b
Memoirs of Tanner, 536–37*n*18
Memphis, Tennessee, 526–27
men, cxliv*n*310; equality with women, 1062–64*nn*a–e, 1062–67, 1064*n*h, 1067*n*m; extraordinary, 1216–17*n*q; of letters, 6*n*h, 7; will of, 1251, 1251*n*m; women and, 1053, 1054
merchant marines, 640, 640*n*h, 644, 644*n*95
merchants, lxvii–lxviii*n*71
Metacom (King Philip), 529*n*10
metaphysics, 809*n*n
Methodists, lxxxiii, 1323, 1362
Mexico, 266, 276, 495, 539–40*n*19, 543, 651; art in, 792*n*f; laws of, 497, 497*n*h; monuments in, 796–99, 796*n*a, 798, 798*n*d; the United States and, 651
Miché-Conté-Ouinique, 1340. *See also* Flint River
Michigan, 492–93*n*7, 608*n*73, 613*n*79, 1312–59, 1313–14*n*h, 1314–19, 1321*n*o, 1326*n*q
the Middle Ages, cxx, 6*n*h, 644, 654; art in, 789–90*n*d; centralization in, 147; democracy in, 1143*n*p; feudal honor, 1093*n*a, 1096–1102; in France, 798*n*d; industry in, 1233; philosophy in, 709–10*n*u. *See also* feudal honor
middle classes, cxxiv–cxxv, cxxxii, 317*n*g, 333–40, 335*n*m, 469*n*c, 512*n*j, 767–68*n*f, 960–61*n*j

Middle Sister island, 1311
Mignet, 853*n*b, 1284–85*n*k
Milbank, François, 796–97*n*b
the military, 747*n*d; commerce and, 647; conscription, 361–62, 362*n*v, 362*n*u; democracy and, 1291–92*n*; military aristocracy, 1253–54*n*o; military despotism, 1247*n*d; military glory, 453–54; military government, 1293*n*; military monarchy, 1161–62*n*j; military oligarchy, 1293*n*; military spirit, 1245*n*a, 1291–92*n*; political jurisdiction and, 182–83. *See also* armies
militias, lxxxi, 129*n*36, 274–75; federal, 274–75; state, 274–75
Mill, John Stuart, xxviii, xci*n*142, xciv, xcvi–xcvii*n*157, xcviii–xcix, ci*n*168, civ, cxliii, 317*n*g, 801–2*n*c, 1200*n*a; *On Liberty,* 402*n*a; review of *Democracy,* 317*n*g
Milnes, Richard M., xlii, 747*n*e, 798*n*d, 1256–57*n*t
Milton, John, 822–23*n*f, 823–24, 836*n*m, 989*n*f; *Paradise,* 1327
the mind, xxvii, 7, 744, 746; desire for unity, 758; external forms of religion and, 750; general ideas and, 739*n*c; limitations and, 761–62*n*d; religion and, 750; weakness of, 740–41*n*d. *See also* human intelligence
minerals, 1235–37*n*y
mines, administration of, 1226–27*n*k. *See also* Rive-de-Gier, mines of
mining, 1235–37*n*y. *See also* Rive-de-Gier, mines of
minorities, lxxxii, 150–51, 304–5, 336, 405–6, 621, 1141, 1142–43*n*m
Minto, Lord, xciv
Mirabeau, Honoré-Gabriel de Riquetti, 454*n*j, 1010*n*f, 1119–20*n*h; *Discours de M. de Mirabeau l'ainé sur l'égalité des partages dans les successions en ligne directe,* 78–79*n*o
misery, 840–41*n*v. *See also under* settlers
missionaries, 476–77
Mississippi, 533*n*14, 541*n*21, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N), 1311
Mississippi River, 34–36, 526, 557, 606, 613*n*80
Mississippi River basin, 594, 607, 607*n*72, 608
Mississippi Valley, 35–36, 86, 606, 658*n*(A)
Missouri, 675–76*n*(G), 677*n*(H)
mistakes, 365
Mitchell, Harvey, 561–62*n*t
Mitchell, Joshua, 960–61*n*j
Mitford, Mary Russell, *Stories of American Life,* 802–3*n*d
mittas, 1327
mixed government, 411–12
Mohammed, 746, 747*n*e
Mohicans, 522–23
Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin), 419
monarchical democracy, 721–23*n*r
monarchy, cvi, cxlvi, 19–20, 23*n*f, 68, 165, 228, 506, 507, 511, 614, 633, 637, 894*n*q, 1128, 1129*n*a, 1132, 1218–19, 1373–74; advantages of, 213; ambition and, 1116–17*n*b; centralization and, 1219; decline of, 22–23; English, 163–64*n*e, 204–5*n*z, 205; European, 194–95, 210–11; French, 163–64*n*e, 204–10, 405, 405*n*f, 634, 679–80*n*(L); military, 1161–62*n*j; positions in, 1129*n*a, 1130; unsalaried public officials and, 325–26. *See also* absolute monarchy; constitutional monarchy; kings
money, lxxxiii, cxxxv, 7, 238, 930–34, 932–33*n*d. *See also* material well-being; wealth

Moniteur du commerce, xci
monks, 6*n*h
Monnard, Charles, xlii
Monnier, Luc, 948–50*n*c
monotony, lxix, 1089–92, 1089*n*a, 1091–92*n*d
Monroe, James, 609*n*75
Monrovia, 576*n*d
Montaigne, Michel de, *Essais,* 920, 920*n*h
Montalembert, lxxvii
Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, lxviii, lxxiii, xc, cviii*n*189, cviii*n*190, cxxxiii, cxlvi, cxlvii, 3*n*a, 28*n*n, 31*n*t, 94*n*f, 95*n*h, 158–59*n*y, 159, 186–87*n*a, 231–32*n*z, 380*n*g, 398*n*2, 412*n*p, 451*n*a, 454*n*j, 532*n*r, 864*n*c; on absolute monarchy, 635, 635*n*f; concept of general spirit of the nation, 74*n*b; *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence,* 151*n*t, 320*n*z, 635, 635*n*f; on despotism, 158–59*n*y; *De l'esprit des lois,* 74*n*b, 78–79*n*o, 158–59*n*y, 260*n*r, 314*n*c, 1110–13*n*v, 1249*n*e; on general spirit, 466*n*v; on honor, 1110–13*n*v; on mores, 466*n*v; praise for federal system, 260*n*r; on virtue, 509*n*a
Montmorency, 650
monuments, 796–99, 796–99*nn*c–e, 796*n*a
Moors, 542*n*x, 552*n*n, 575
morality, 390–91, 1273; moral force, 231–32*n*z; moral laws, 1094, 1094*n*c; moral relativism, 1095–96*n*e, 1102; Romans and, 1102. *See also* mores
moral science, cxlv*n*315
mores, xxvii, lxxxiii, cii*n*172, cviii*n*190, cxliv*n*310, 49*n*e, 473, 630, 690, 994*n*h, 1066, 1072–73*n*c, 1073, 1074, 1104; aristocracy and, 989–92, 1053*n*b, 1054, 1054*n*c, 1059–61; climate and, 1052, 1052*n*a, 1054; definition of, 466, 466*n*v; democracy and, 494–504, 512–13, 512*n*m, 512*n*n, 986–1186, 986*n*a; education of young girls and, 1041–42*nn*a–c, 1041–47, 1044*n*f; in England, 1053, 1053*n*b; equality and, 4, 986, 986*n*a, 987–88*nn*a–b, 987–94, 989*n*d, 1052–54*nn*a–c, 1052–61, 1055*n*d, 1059*n*h; in Europe, 1052*n*a, 1059; feudalism and, 989–92; in France, 1052*n*a, 1059–61, 1060–61, 1076*n*g; influence of democracy on, 871*n*a; laws and, cix*n*195; race and, 1052, 1052*n*a, 1054; religion and, 467*n*w, 473–74, 1052, 1052*n*a, 1054; superiority over laws, 494–500, 499*n*m; in the United States, 466–77, 494–504, 987–88*n*b, 987–94, 1005–6, 1005*n*a, 1052–54*nn*a–c, 1052–61, 1055*n*d, 1059*n*h, 1076*n*g; women and, 473–74, 1041–42*n*c, 1041–47, 1052–54*nn*a–b, 1052–61, 1057–58*n*f, 1059*n*h, 1066. *See also* morality; race
More, Thomas, cxxi*n*235; *Utopia,* 727–28*n*b
Morgan (freemason), 285*n*f
Morris, Gouverneur, 190*n*4
Morris, Robert, 190*n*4
Morton, F. L., 1031*n*b
Morton, Nathaniel, 666–74*n*(F), 669; *New England's Memorial,* 54–58, 55–56*n*p, 58*n*q
Moslems, 858*n*k. *See also* Islam
mosquitos, 1345
Mottley, Mary (Marie) (wife), xxx, xxxi, lxxvii*n*101, lxxx, xcix, 798–99*n*e, 845–46*n*b, 1110–13*n*v, 1295*n*a
mulattos, 550*n*f, 553–54*n*o, 572–73. *See also* half-breeds

municipalities: municipal administration, lxxxi, 118, 119; municipal liberty (*see* town liberties); municipal magistrates, 118; municipal regimes, 650*n*1. *See also* towns
Murat, Achille, *Esquisse morale et politique des États-Unis,* 561–62*n*t
music, 788*n*b

Napoléon, cxi*n*199, 148, 446, 489*n*[*], 635, 640*n*j, 855*n*f, 1124–25*n*p, 1124*n*o, 1160, 1160*n*h, 1183, 1209–10, 1210*n*f, 1235–37*n*y
Narragansetts, 522–23
National Calendar, 208*n*19, 608*n*d, 608*n*73, 618*n*p
National Intelligencer, 523*n*j, 576*n*d, 595*n*w, 618*n*r, 621–22*n*v
national interest, 923*n*m
nationalism. *See* national pride
nationality, 584*n*n
national matters, 584–85
national pride, 157–58, 158–59*n*y, 1290–91, 1290–91*n*. *See also* patriotism
national will, 91. *See also* sovereignty of the people
nations: law of, 244, 1183; size of, 255–58, 257*n*o
Native Americans. *See* Indians
native land, xxvii
nature, 496, 835–37. *See also* wilderness
navy, 362
Neal, John, 802–3*n*d
necessity, 1284–85*n*k
neologisms, 819–21*n*d, 822–23*n*f, 823
Netherlands. *See* Dutch Republic
New England, 52–53, 496, 530, 614*n*j, 1016–17; accountability of public officials in, 127; administration in, 115–29; Blacks in, 550*n*f; counties in, 114–15; division of property in, 459, 459*n*2; education in, 490–91, 490*n*a; emigration from, 459; immigration to, 53–54, 76; England and, 59–60; establishment of schools in, 67; founders of, 69; histories of, 666–74*n*(F), 669–74; Indians in, 522–23, 529*n*10; jury system in, 685–96*n*(C), 686; laws of, 63–64*n*25, 63–65, 64*n*26, 69; legislative power in, 120–21; liberty in, 60; mores in, 69; penal laws in, 62–64, 63*n*25; political development in, 65–67; religious persecution in, 63–64, 63–64*n*25, 64*n*26; selection of jurors in, 329; self-government in, 60–61; slavery in, 556; sovereignty of the people in, 109; states of, 52*n*5; towns in, 103–14, 130 (*see* New England towns); value of intellectual superiority in, 319. *See also* New England towns; *specific states*
New England Courant, 683–84*n*(A)
New Englanders, 1316–17
New England towns, 65–66, 103–14, 130. *See also* towns
New Hampshire, 52*n*5, 666–74*n*(F), 673–74, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
New Jersey, 60*n*12, 677*n*(H)
New Orleans, Louisiana, 453–54, 453*n*f, 650
newspapers, cxv, cxv*n*214, 288, 293, 295–96, 297*n*1, 331, 490, 613*n*79, 683–84*n*(A), 906*n*c; associations and, 905–6*nn*a–b, 905–10, 908*n*e; banks and, 619; democracy and, 905–6*nn*a–b, 905–10, 907*n*d, 909*n*1; in England, 909; equality of conditions and, 909–10; in France, 909. *See also* the press
Newton, Isaac, cxxii*n*241, 715*n*f, 735*n*m, 781–82*n*j
the New World, cxiv, 4; aristocracy in, 495; conquest of, 1355, 1355*n*a; equal-

ity of conditions in, 495; rejection of territorial aristocracy in, 50–51. *See also* America
New York, 60*n*11, 261*n*w, 451*n*1, 461, 595, 596, 1303, 1304, 1312; abolition in, 553–54*n*0, 564; act of cession by, 617*n*82; administrative centralization in, 134–35; aristocracy in, 85; Blacks in, 569; budget devoted to the poor and to public education, 343*n*10; centralization of public education in, 134–35*n*41, 134*n*40; congressional representation in, 198, 608–9; Constitution of, 481*n*5; election of deputies in, 131, 131*n*38; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); histories of, 666–74*n*(F), 674; inheritance laws in, 675–76*n*(G); jury system in, 685–96*n*(C); penal system in, lxi; political jurisdiction in, 682*n*(N); population growth in, 608–9; settlements in, 1314–19; slavery in, 556*n*33, 564; towns in, 104–5*n*2, 130; voting rights in, 553–54*n*0
New York, New York, 454*n*1
Niles, Nathaniel, 62*n*v, 84*n*a, 99–100*n*c
Nimitz, August H., Jr., 561–62*n*t
nobility, 6*n*h, 7–8, 10, 19–20, 508; ruin of, 7*n*h. *See also* aristocracy
Nolla, Eduardo, xxiv
nominalism, 718*n*m
non-material enjoyments, 954–62, 954*nn*a–b
Norman association, 911*n*b
Normandy, France, 271–72, 596
the North, 51, 497–98, 498–99*n*k, 603*n*[*], 614*n*k, 1109*n*s; abolition in, 564–65, 568–71, 574; agriculture in, 595; cereal crops in, 595; character of the, 52–53; commerce in, 607, 607*n*70, 646, 646*n*[*]; compared with other regions, 601–11; congressional representation of, 609–10; dependence on other regions, 597; economy of, 560; emancipation in, 574; emigration from, 614; English character in, 52–53; in favor of tariffs, 284–85; growth in, 606–11; increasing power of, 610; industriousness of, 560; industry in, 560, 595–96, 607; interracial marriage in, 555; manufacturing and, 285; population growth in, 610; racial prejudice in, 555; slavery and, 556, 556*n*33, 562, 562*n*39, 568–71, 578–79, 1016–17; tariffs and, 306. *See also* New England; *specific states*
North America: as English possession, 60; exterior configuration of, 33–44; flora and fauna of, 38–39; French possessions in, 650–51; Indians in, 456; languages of, 659–61*n*(C); providence and, 456–57; South America and, 645; wilderness of, 457–58. *See also* America; *specific countries and colonies*
North Carolina, 481*n*5, 569*n*45, 617*n*82, 620–24, 675–76*n*(G), 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
the Northeast. *See* the North
the Northwest, 130–31, 607–8. *See also* the West; *specific states*
nullification affair, 618*n*r, 621–22*n*v, 621–24, 621*n*u, 622–23*n*87, 624, 625
nullification doctrine, 621–24

oaths, lxxxi
obedience, 108, 904, 904*n*u
occupations, 87
O'Connell, Daniel, 580*n*h
Oconostata, 530*n*[*]
officers, xxvii, 1165–69, 1165*n*a, 1170–71*nn*a–c, 1170–75

officials. *See* public officals
Of the Dominion of Democracy in America, 2*n*a. *See also Democracy in America*
Ohio, 557, 558*n*36, 558*n*r, 596, 1311; abolition in, 558–61; congressional representation in, 609; election of deputies in, 131; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); freedmen in, 553–54*n*o, 557*n*35; Governor's salary in, 341*n*8; growth of, 558; jury system in, 685–96*n*(C); political jurisdiction in, 682*n*(N); population of, 460, 558, 558*n*27, 608*n*73, 609; racial prejudice in, 553–54*n*o; slavery in, 557*n*35; town life in, 131; voting rights in, 553–54*n*o
Ohio River, 557
Old Regime, cx, cxix
oligarchy, military, 1293*n*
Ollivier, Alexandrine. *See* Tocqueville, Alexandrine de (sister-in-law)
Oneida Castle, 1304–5*n*b
opinion, 407, 691, 692, 719–20, 720–21*n*p, 1095–96*n*e, 1096*n*f, 1097–98*n*h, 1110–13*n*v, 1114*n*x, 1145*n*s, 1146–47; as basis for unity, 598–99, 598–99*n*z, 598*n*y; Cartesian method, 697–98*n*a; democracy and, 1149; equality of conditions and, 4; freedom of the press and, 298–301; of the majority, 719–20; power of, 231. *See also* common opinion; public opinion
opposition, cxlv–cxlvi, cxlv*n*315, cxlvii, cxlviii
oratory: American, 843–44, 843*n*a; parliamentary eloquence, 861–70, 861*n*na–b, 864–65*nn*c–d, 866–67*n*[*]; preachers, 859–60, 859–60*n*m
originality, 1091–92, 1091–92*n*d, 1223*n*f
Ortega y Gasset, José, cvi
Osages, 528–29*n*8, 528*n*[*]

Pacheco, Emilio, xxiv
Pacific Ocean, 34
paganism, 1277*n*a
Pagnerre, Laurent-Antoine, xxxvii–xxxviii*n*20
painting, 795, 795*n*k
Palenque, Mexico, 798*n*d
pantheism, 757–58, 1204*n*f
paper wealth, 6*n*h, 9
paperwork, 1226–27*n*k
Pappe, H. O., 402*n*a
Paris, bibliothèque historique de la ville de, xlii
parish commissioners, 107, 107*n*m
Parlement de Paris, 168, 170, 709–10*n*u
parlements, 163–64*n*e, 177–78, 679–80*n*(L), 680. *See also Parlement de Paris*
Parliament (England), 171, 172–73, 681n(M), 861*n*a, 862–63, 868, 868*n*e
parliamentary eloquence, 861–70, 861*n*na–b, 864–65*nn*c–d, 866–67*n*[*]; aristocracy and, 862–64, 868–69, 868*n*e, 868*n*f; democracy and, 861*nn*a–b, 868*n*f; in France, 869
parliamentary prerogatives, 1269
parties, 279–88, 281–82*n*a, 284*n*c; associations as weapons of, 288; definition of, 279; elections and, 322; Federalists, 282–83*n*b, 283–84; formation of, lxxxi; great, 280–81, 281–82*n*a, 284–85; newspapers as weapons of, 288; peace and, 287*n*h; Republicans, 282–83*n*b, 283–84; small, 280–81, 285; working of, lxxxi
Pascal, Blaise, cxxi, cxxii*n*240, cxxv*n*249, cxliii, 31*n*t, 158–59*n*y, 412–13*n*s, 781–82, 781–82*n*j, 810–12*n*r, 840–41*n*v, 1067*n*k; *Pensées,*

712–13*n*c, 765–66*n*d, 928, 928*n*d, 1122
Pasha of Egypt, 1214, 1215*n*o
passions, cxliv–cxlv, cxlv*n*314, cxlviii*n*323, 1053, 1054, 1187–89*n*a
the past. *See* history
patents, lxxxii
paternal despotism, 1249*n*e, 1250–51
paternal power, lxxxiii
patois, 826, 826*n*h
patriotism, lxix, 153–54, 158–59*n*y, 159–60, 290, 290*n*b, 375–401, 588, 589, 597–98, 598–99n*z,* 613, 1086*n*c, 1100–1101, 1100*n*j; American, 385–89, 388*n*s; ancient, 1100*n*j; in France, 1100, 1100*n*2; laws and, 160. *See also* nationalism; national pride
Paulding, James Kirke, 802–3*n*d
pauperism, cii*n*171
pays d'États, 195
peace, 1291–92*n*; commerce and, 1178*n*a; democracy and, 1153–64, 1153*n*a, 1178*n*a; property and, 1158–59
peasants, 491
Peletier d'Aunay family, xlix
penal laws, lxxxiii, 62–64, 63*n*20, 240
penal systems, xliv, lxxiv–lxxviii, 2na; American, lxi, lxv, lxxviii; English, lxxviii–lxxix; French, lxxiv–lxxv; in Pennsylvania, lxxviii. *See also* penal systems; prisons
penitentiary systems. *See* penal systems
Pennsylvania, 60*n*12, 306, 414*n*4, 454*n*1, 595, 1311; abolition in, 553–54*n*o; armed forces in, 151*n*[*]; Blacks in, 569; county budgets in, 352*n*11; election of deputies in, 131; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); histories of, 666–74*n*(F), 674; legislative assemblies in, 137; penal institutions in, lxi, lxxviii; population of, 604*n*63, 652; slavery in, 562, 562*n*39; temperance societies in, 397*n*1; town life in, 130; Whiskey Tax rebellion, 590–91*n*t
Pennsylvania Historical Society, 372–74*n*f
Penn, William, 523, 666–74*n*(F), 674
Pequots, 522–23
perfectibility of man, 705–7*n*r, 759–62, 759*n*a, 759*n*b
Perry, Commodore, 1311
personal estates, 6*n*h
personal property, 350–51
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 306, 352*n*11, 454*n*1
Philip (Metacom), 529*n*10
Philip of Macedon, 253*n*36
Philippe le Bel (the Fair), 678–79*n*(K)
Phillimore, Madame, 656–57*n*h
philosophes, cxxiv, cxxiv*n*248, cxxv
philosophical method, ciii, cxxiv, 697–98*n*a, 697–710, 698–99a, 702–3*n*n, 703–4*n*o, 707–8*n*s, 776, 1014–15*n*m
philosophy, cxx–cxxxii, cxxi*n*235, cxxv, 702–4, 703–4*n*o, 707–8*n*s, 708*n*t, 709–10*n*u, 1092*n*f; of action, cxx–cxxxii; Americans and, 697–710, 739*n*c, 784*n*n; Christianity and, 703–4*n*o; democracy and, cxxv–cxxvi, 711–25, 713–14*n*e, 779–80*n*g; equality of conditions and, 717–18, 718*n*m, 739*n*c; in Europe, 702–3*n*n, 702–5, 702*n*m, 703–4*n*o; French, 703–4*n*o, 704, 705, 739*n*c; Germans and, 739*n*c; as liberty, cxxix; in the Middle Ages, 709–10*n*u; middle class and, cxxxii; pantheism, 757–58; political, cxlviii (*see also* political theory); religion and, 703–4*n*o, 705–7*n*r, 707–8*n*s, 709–10*n*u, 713–14*n*e. *See also* general ideas; philosophical method

physical force, 231–32*n*z
Pierson, George W., xxx*n*2, xxxi, xxxiii*n*10, liv*n*41, lxxii, 99–100*n*c, 145–46*n*g, 454*n*h, 537–38*n*v, 548*n*c, 754*n*a, 802–3*n*d, 1299*n*f, 1302*n*j, 1314*n*j, 1326*n*q, 1333*n*s, 1365*n*b
pilgrims, 54–58, 58–89, 58*n*10, 59*n*r, 76, 766–67
pioneers, cxiii, cxiii*n*205, cxiv–cxv, cxiv*n*211, 491–92, 492*n*6, 1287–88*n,* 1316–19; children, 1319; solitude of, 1317–18; women, 1287–88*n,* 1318–19. *See also* settlers
piracy, 238*n*29
Pitkins, Timothy, *History,* 58*n*10, 60*n*12
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1311
pity. *See* sympathy
Plaideurs, cvi
Plato, cxxi*n*237, 733*n*h, 822–23*n*f, 940*n*e, 959, 1082
Platte River, 658*n*(A)
Plutarch, 782–83, 810–12*n*r, 816*n*b, 1102; *Life of Alexander,* 849*n*d; *Vie de Marcellus,* 782–83*n*k; *Vies des hommes,* 816*n*b
Plymouth, Massachusetts, 57, 57*n*8, 61, 63–64*n*25
Plymouth Rock, 57, 57*n*8
poetry, 794, 832*nn*c–e, 834*n*h; in America, 835–37; Arabs and, 839*n*t; aristocracy and, 832–35, 833*n*g, 838; democracy and, 830–31*nn*a–b, 830–44, 835*n*j, 837*nn*o–p, 842*n*x, 843*n*a; divinity and, 837–38, 839*n*s; equality and, 832, 834, 835, 842; in human affairs, 837–38, 839*n*s, 840; humanitarian, 839*n*s; sensual, 839*n*t. *See also* literature
Poland, 111*n*t, 212, 219, 260*n*r, 471, 1367
political activity, 395–401, 398*n*2, 1365–67
political associations, 302–12, 308, 308*n*j, 895*n*a, 896, 911–17, 911*nn*a–b
political constitution, literature and, 812
political crimes, 184, 200, 682*n*(N). *See also* political jurisdiction
political independence, 1259–60*n*w
political institutions, 829, 1135*n*c, 1145*n*r, 1290–91. *See also* free institutions
political jurisdiction, 179–80*n*a; in England, 180, 180*n*1, 181, 183; in Europe, 180*n*1, 181, 182*n*c, 183–84; in France, 180, 181, 182*n*c, 183; in Massachusetts, 184, 184*n*d; the military and, 182–83; separation of powers and, 179, 182*n*c; in the United States, 179–85, 182*n*c, 682*n*(N); in Virginia, 184
political laws, 721
political liberty, 775–76*n*b, 778–79*n*f
political philosophy, cxi–cxii, cxi*n*193, cxxi, cxl–cxli, cxlviii
political power, cxlvi
political regimes, cxvii–cxviii. *See also specific kinds of regimes*
political rights, 386–87*n*r, 387, 1230–31*n*p. *See also specific rights*
political science, cxvi, cxliii, 16–17*n*x. *See also* administrative science
political society, lxxxi, cx, 465, 633, 689–90*n*a, 819–21*n*d, 987–88*n*b; democratic ideas and, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; influence of democratic ideas and sentiments on, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; judicial power and, 167–78; in the United States, 633–34
political state, cix–cx, cix*n*193, cxii, cxvii, cxx, cxlv, cxlv*n*313
political theory, cxi–cxii, cxi*n*193, cxxi, cxxv, cxxvi–cxxv, cxl–cxli, cxlviii;

Americans and, 737–41, 737*n*a; compared to religion, cxxvi–cxxv; the French and, 737–41, 737*n*a; practice and, cxxviii–cxxix; in the United States, 171
politics, 478–88, 737–41, 755. *See also specific aspects of politics*
Polonceau, M., 1238*n*b
Pontiac, Michigan, 1319–26
the poor, 333–40, 335–36*n*n, 343*n*10, 363, 1028–29*n*g, 1228–29; bail and, 72, 72*n*d; in England, 819–21*n*d; law and, 394–95; overseers of, 106; prison and, 72, 72*n*d; in the United States, 892. *See also* lower classes
Poor Law, 1200*n*a
poor tax, 337
Pope, Alexander, 835*n*j
popular power, 282
population growth, 458–59, 605–11, 610*n*77, 610*n*e
Poquelin, Jean-Baptiste. *See* Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin)
Port Libre (Port-Royal), xlix
ports, 1237
the Portuguese, 644
Portuguese colonies, 495, 644, 645
positions, 1129–32, 1129*n*a, 1129*n*b, 1129*nn*a–b, 1130, 1130*n*d, 1131*n*e
positivism, cxxi–cxxii, cxxi*n*239
postal service, 613*n*79
post roads, 613*n*79
Potomac River, 594, 606
power, 6–10, 19–20, 116*n*b, 1191–92*n*b, 1277*n*b; concentration of, 1194–1205, 1194*nn*a–b, 1200–1202*nn*a–c, 1202–3*n*1, 1203*n*d (*see also* centralization); in democracies, 425–26, 425*n*5; democratization of, 19–20; feudal, 19–20; of one man, xxvii; popular power, 282; scattering of via American town, 111–12; through landed property, 6; wealth and, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f. *See also* authority; separation of powers; *specific powers*
practice, cxxi, cxxv, cxxvi, cxxx; theory and, cxxviii–cxxix
Pradt, Abbé de, 656–57*n*h
Praetorians, 149
preaching, 859–60, 859–60*n*m
Préau de la Baraudière, Rose, liv*n*42
prejudice, racial, 548–82, 550*n*f, 551, 552*n*n, 554*n*p, 565
the Presidency, lxxxi, 202*n*y, 205–6*n*a, 249–50, 624–25, 625*n*w; compared to English kingship, 204–5*n*z; compared to French kingship, 204–8; dependence of the, 201, 202; lame duck, 213; powers of (*see* executive powers); transitions between Presidents, 213–14, 214–15*n*k. *See also* the President
the President, lxxxii, 201, 201*n*x, 617, 617*n*p, 618*n*83, 625; Bank of the United States and, 619; as Commander in Chief of the militia, 274–75; Congress and, 201, 202, 206–7, 210–11, 215–17*n*m; election of, 201–2, 211–24, 221–22*n*p; foreign affairs and, 366–67, 367*n*16, 369[*], 371, 372–74*n*f; nullification affair and, 624; powers of, 625–27; prerogatives that go unused, 209–10; reelection of, 225–26*n*u, 225–29; reports to Congress, 861*n*b; salary of, 203, 970–71; the Senate and, 201, 202, 207*n*17; sovereignty and, 208; treaties and, 200; veto power of, 203. *See also* the Presidency
Presqu'Ile, Pennsylvania, 1311
the press, 683–84*n*(A), 905–10; democracy and, cxxxvi*n*287, 910*n*f, 1269–70; as democratic instrument of liberty, 1269–70; in Europe, 291,

the press (*continued*)
293, 296; in France, 293, 297; freedom of, 289–301, 1149, 1269–70; opinion and, 298–301; public opinion and, 292–93, 298; radical, 1204*n*f; in the United States, 292–93, 295–98. *See also* freedom of the press; newspapers
pride, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1002*n*c, 1126; national (*see* national pride)
primogeniture, 81–82, 85–86*n*e, 459
Princeton University, xlii
printing, discovery of, 7*n*h, 9
prisons, 72, 72*n*d, 114, 796–97*n*b, 1247*n*d; in France, lxxiv–lxxv, 409; Toulon prison, lxxiv–lxxv; in the United States, 409. *See also* penal systems
privilege, 1211, 1230–31*n*p, 1263; in France, 1222; hatred of, 1202–3, 1203*n*d; liberty and, 1263–64, 1263–64*n*c
Proceedings of the Indian Board in the City of New York, 533*n*14
professions, 969–71, 969*n*a; commercial, 972–79, 972*nn*a–b, 973*n*1, 974*n*d, 977–79*n*j, 977*n*g, 989*n*d; industrial, 972–79, 972*nn*a–b, 973*n*1, 974*n*d, 977–79*n*j, 977*n*g
Properce, 1053*n*b
property, 1136*n*f, 1228*n*n; ancient, 1266*n*h; aristocracy and, 1266*n*h; commercial, 1235–37*n*y; division of, 459, 460, 1136*n*f; domanial, 1266*n*h; in England, 1223*n*d; equality of conditions and, 1136*n*f; industrial, 1232–33*n*v, 1233–34, 1233*n*v, 1235–37*n*y, 1266*n*h; industry and, 1231*n*r; landed, 6, 78–79*n*o, 78–85, 83*n*3; peace and, 1158–59; revolution and, 1136–40, 1136*n*e; war and, 1183–84. *See also* inheritance laws; land
prosperity as greatest threat to the United States, 611
prostitutes, 1057–58*n*f
Protestantism, lxviii–lxvix, cxxxi, cxxxi*n*269, 9, 469–70, 469*n*c, 702*n*k, 755, 755*n*c; affinity to republican government, 470*n*e; democracy and, 699–700*n*e; equality and, 469–70; middle class and, 469*n*c; mingling of races in, 553–54*n*o; women and, 1041–42*n*c, 1042
Proud, Robert, *The History of Pennsylvania,* 666–74*n*(F), 674
Provence, France, 596
Providence, Rhode Island, 58*n*10, 61
providentialism, cxvi, cxvii, cxviii
provincial banks, 619
provincial government, 162, 162*n*b, 165–66, 261–63, 264. *See also* states
provincial liberties, 165, 630
provincial matters, 584–85
Prussia, 253*n*36
public administration, 331–32, 332*n*d, 1197–98*n*j, 1242–43; centralization and, 1206–44 (*see also* administrative centralization); in England, 1211–12; justices of the peace and, 123–24; in Massachusetts, 131; in New York, 131; in Ohio, 131; in Pennsylvania, 131
public affairs, xxvii; administration of by citizens, 891–93, 891*n*k; despotism and, 948–50*n*c; lack of outstanding leadership in, 314–18; material enjoyments and, 948–53, 948*n*a; religion and, 962
public education, lxxxi, 106, 134–35*n*41, 134*n*40, 343*n*10. *See also* education
public expenditures, 333–40, 346–48; in aristocracies, 337–38; comparison of American and French, 349–50*n*j,

349–56, 353–54*nn*12–13; influence of class on, 333–40; taxes and, 345–48, 350; universal suffrage and, 336–37
public good, 248–49*n*35
public institutions, 796–97*n*b, 1142. *See also specific institutions*
publicity, 1083
public lands, 617–18, 618*n*6
public offices, lxxxi, 105, 324–27, 326*n*w, 1129–32, 1129*nn*a–b, 1131*n*e, 1224*n*2. *See also* public officials
public officials, xxxli, xxvii, 685–96*n*(C), 686; accountability of, 127–28, 127*n*31; administrative faults of, 127, 127*n*31; American, 208, 208*n*19; appointment of, lxxxii; arbitrariness of, 327–30, 415–16, 415–16*n*x; corruption of, 380–81; crimes committed by, 127; under the dominion of American democracy, 324–27; election of, 133–34; French, 119, 208, 208*nn*18–19, 341–42*n*9; mediocrity of, 314–18, 327; municipal magistrates, 118; mutability of, 332*n*c; in New England, 119; omnipotence of the majority and, 415–16, 415–16*n*x; salaries and, 325–26, 340–43, 341–42*n*9, 347*n*f; weaknesses of, 381. *See also* magistrates; public offices
public opinion, lxxxi, cx, cx*n*196, cxvii, cxxvii, cxxxiii, cxxxvi, 285, 414, 421, 510, 719–20, 720–21*n*p, 753, 1101*n*k, 1104, 1108, 1110*n*u, 1142–43, 1146–47; Blacks and, 548*n*c; dominance of in the United States, 207–8; oppression by, cxxxvii–cxxxviii; the press and, 292–93, 298; science and, 781; slavery and, 556*n*33; in the United States, 1142–43. *See also* common opinion; the majority; opinion
public prosecutors, lxxxiii
public spirit, 384–89, 387
public works, 1234–40, 1237, 1238*n*b, 1239–40*n*d
Puritanism, 53–54, 54–58, 59, 455, 662–65*n*(E), 689–90*n*a, 705–7*n*r, 752, 752*n*k, 763–64*n*b, 851, 1048–49, 1081*n*d
Puritans, 53–58, 530
Pyrrhonism, 1281*n*e

Quaker Collection, Haverford College, 548*n*c
Quakers, lxxxiii, 63–64*n*25, 666–74*n*(F), 674, 1362, 1362*n*b, 1363, 1363*n*d
Quapaws, 528–29*n*8
Quarterly Review, xcii
Québec, Canada, 632
Quincy Adams, John, 222

Rabelais, François, 810–12*n*r
race, 515–648k, 694–95*n*m, 1284–85*n*k; in America, 735*n*m; influence on conduct, 997, 997*n*d; intermingling of races, 521, 552–53, 552*n*h, 552*n*n, 553–54*n*o, 572–75, 574*n*b, 580–81; interracial unions, 534*n*17, 553–54*n*o; morals and, 1052, 1052*n*a, 1054; mortality and, 565*n*41; race war, 548*n*c; racial prejudice, 548–82, 550*n*f, 551, 552*n*n, 553–54*n*o, 554*n*p, 555, 565 (*see also* segregation); racial problems on the East coast in 1834, 515*n*a; segregation, 548*n*c; slavery and, 550; in the South, 555, 572–75, 574*n*b. *See also specific races*
Racine, Jean, 814*n*c; *Britannicus,* 847–48
railroads, 1239–40*n*d
Raphael, 795, 832*n*e
rational individualism, cxxiv–cxxv, cxlii
rationalism, cxxiv–cxxv, cxxvi, cxlii, 700*n*j. *See also* reason

rationality, cxxvi
Raudot, Rodat Claude, 80*n*q, 81*n*s
raw materials, 639*n*94
readers, aristocracy and, 813
real estate, 350–51
realism, 718*n*m
reason, cxxiv, cxxv, cxxvi, cxxxi, 697–710, 700*n*j, 709; collective, 719*n*o (*see also* public opinion); democracy and, cxxxiii–cxl; reign of total, cxxxii–cxl. *See also* rationalism
Récamier, Madame, 699*n*d
recurrence, cxxvi
Rédier, Antoine, xxxi*n*3
Red Jacket, 530*n*[*], 530*n*q
Red River, 35, 658*n*(A)
red tape, 1226–27*n*k
re-election, 225–29
Reeve, Henry, lvi–lvii, xciv, 718*n*m, 1033–35*n*e, 1200*n*a
reflection, cxxi
the Reformation, cx, 702, 702*n*k, 704, 1351
regimes, typology of, cxlvi*n*317, 23*n*f
regulations, 118
relationships: democracy and, 995–99, 995*nn*a–b, 1005–6, 1005*n*a; between masters and workers, 1025–26*n*a–b, 1025–30; between servants and masters, 1007–8*nn*a–b, 1007–19. *See also* habitual relations
religion, lxviii–lxvix, cxxx–cxxxi*nn*267–270, cxxx*n*264, cxxxi, cxlv*n*315, 50, 467*n*[*], 467*n*x, 468*n*y, 468*n*z, 506, 507, 599, 599*n*a, 692, 697–98*n*a, 702*n*k, 750*n*1, 751*n*h, 958*n*g, 1223*n*e, 1284–85*n*k; in America, cxxviii, cxxxviii, cxxxix, 705–7, 705–7*n*r, 769, 954–62, 954*nn*a–b; art and, 6*n*h; authority and, 720–21*n*p, 745, 754, 756; Blacks and, 555; democracy and, 482*n*u, 742–43*n*b, 742–53, 742*n*a, 748–49*n*f, 752*n*j, 752*n*k, 954–62, 954*nn*a–b, 960–61*n*j, 962*n*m, 965–68, 965*n*a, 1266–67*n*j; doctrine of interest well understood and, 923–25*n*n, 926–29, 926*n*a; in England, 960–61*n*j; enlightenment and, 67, 479; equality and, 745–46, 747, 752, 754; in Europe, 479, 479*n*q, 487–88*n*x, 488; external forms of, 750; as first among political institutions, 482*n*u; freedom of, lxxxiii; general ideas and, 748–49*n*f; government and, 1223–24; habits and, 705–7; influence on maintaining the democratic republic of the United States, 467–72; liberty and, cxxx, 26, 69–70, 475–79, 479*n*q, 712–13*n*c, 745; the majority and, cxxx, 721–23*n*r, 752*n*j; material well-being and, 954–62, 954*n*a; the mind and, 750; mores and, 467*n*w, 473–74, 1052, 1052*n*a, 1054; nomenclature of religious sects, lxxxiii; non-material enjoyments and, 954–62, 954*nn*a–b; in the Northeast, 498; pantheism, 757–58, 758*n*c; penal laws against particular sects, 63–64, 63–64*n*25, 64*n*26; philosophy and, 703–4*n*o, 705–7*n*r, 707–8*n*s, 709–10*n*u, 713–14*n*e; of pilgrims, 766–67; among pioneers, 1323–24; as a political institution, 467–72; political theory as, cxxvi; politics and, lxxxiii, 478–88; power of, 478–88; preaching, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; as the primary political institution in the United States, 475; public affairs and, 962; religious authority, 754; religious eloquence, 859–60, 859–60*n*m; religious sects in the United States, 939–41, 939*nn*a–c, 941*n*f, 1360–64,

1360*n*a (*see also specific religious sects*); religious society, lxxxi, lxxxiii; sentiments and, 705–7; separation of church and State, 480, 481*n*5; servitude and, cxxix–cxxx, cxxx*n*266; slavery and, 556; society and, lxxxiii, 472–78; in the United States, 467–78, 472*n*g, 478–88, 478*n*p, 479*n*q, 480*n*t, 481*nn*4–5, 482*n*u, 487–88*n*x, 487*n*w, 742–53, 742*n*a, 939–41, 939*nn*a–c, 941*n*f, 954–62, 954*n*a; women and, 1041–42*n*c, 1044–45, 1044*n*f, 1048–49. *See also* beliefs; faith; spiritualism; *specific religions*
the Renaissance, 795
rents. *See* leases
The Report of the Postmaster General, 613*n*79
Reports of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan, 1326*n*q
representative governments *vs.* democracies, 317–18, 317*n*g
representation, principle of, 337*n*p
republican democracy, 721–23*n*r
republican institutions, 23*n*f, 627–37, 628–29*n*z
republican liberty, 628–29*n*z
Republicans, 282–83*n*b, 283–84, 630
republics, cvi, cxviii, 15–16*n*w, 88, 152*n*x, 376, 627–28, 628–29*n*z, 629*n*a, 630–31; ancient, 509*n*a; economy of, 349*n*j; fragility of, 258; representative governments *vs.* democracies, 317–18, 317*n*g; republican democracy, 721–23*n*r; as tranquil rule of the majority, 630; viability in large nations, 255–58; viability in small nations, 256–58, 257*n*o; virtue and, 509, 509*n*a. *See also* republican institutions
Resh, Richard, 561–62*n*t
restlessness, xxvi, 930*n*a, 942–47, 942*n*a, 947*n*k
the Restoration, liii, lxxvi, 5*n*e, 446
The Revised Statutes of the State of New York, 130–31, 131*n*38, 685–96*n*(C), 686
revolution, cvi–cxvi, cvii*n*186, cxi*n*200, cxvii, cxxvi, cxxxii, cxxxviii, cxxxix, cxxxix*n*294, cxl, cxlii, 12–13*n*r, 711–12*n*b, 719*n*n, 780, 1017, 1018, 1019, 1078*n*k, 1151*n*[*], 1155–56*n*c, 1156–57*nn*d, 1165–69, 1165*nn*a–b, 1167*n*1, 1187–89*n*a, 1206–7*n*a, 1209, 1211, 1242–43, 1247*n*d, 1260*n*x, 1273–74; ambition and, 1116*n*a, 1118, 1118*n*f, 1119–20; anarchy and, 1250–51*n*j; aristocracy and, 1136*n*f, 1141–42*n*m, 1142–43*n*m, 1148; beliefs and, 712–13*n*c; Blacks and, 1141; in China, 786; commerce and, 1136*n*f; definition of, 1150*n*w; democracy and, 6, 17–19, 885–86, 886*n*c, 1116*n*a, 1133–34*n*b, 1133–52, 1136*n*f, 1142–43*n*m, 1144–45*n*q, 1145*n*r, 1146–47*n*1, 1151*n*y, 1152; equality and, 1133–34*n*b, 1133–52, 1135*n*c, 1141–42*n*m, 1144–45*n*q, 1144–46, 1145*n*r, 1214*n*n, 1243–44, 1274*n*v; Europe and, 1141, 1222, 1222*n*c, 1374 (*see also* the French Revolution); fear of, 1140–41, 1158–59, 1201*n*b; government and, 1214*n*n; individualism and, 885–86, 886*n*c; industry and, 1138; intellectual, 1142–43*n*m, 1146–47*n*1; jurists and, 433; literature and, 845–46*nn*a–b, 845*n*a, 846; military, 1158–59; minorities and, 1141; property and, 1136–40, 1136*n*e, 1136*n*f; public institutions and, 1142; revolutionary ideas, 1273–74; revolutionary spirit, 1273–74, 1273*n*u; theater and,

revolution (*continued*)
845*n*a; theory of, 1133–35*nn*a–c, 1133–52; the United States and, cxiii–cxiv, 1140–41, 1140*n*j, 1374 (*see also* the American Revolution); waning of, 1133–35*nn*a–c, 1133–52. *See also specific revolutions*
Revolution of 1830. *See* July Revolution
Revue des deux mondes, xcii, 561–62*n*t, 621*n*u, 656–57*n*h, 718*n*m, 802–3*n*d, 813*n*b, 854*n*d, 856*n*g, 897–98*n*f, 1215*n*o, 1303*n*a
Rhode Island, 52*n*5, 58*n*10, 61, 65*n*30, 677*n*(H)
rice plantations, 566*n*42, 595
the rich, 333–40, 363, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 1028–29*n*g, 1228; in England, 819–21*n*d; governance and, 974–76, 974*n*d; the law and, 394–95; manners of, 1078*n*k; in the United States, 892
Richards, Mr. (mayor of Philadelphia), 352*n*11
Richter, Melvin, xxiv, 158–59*n*y, 451*n*a, 466*n*v, 570*n*x, 1133*n*c
right of complaint, 128
right of inspection, 128
right of property, 390–91
right of reason, 1272*n*t
rights, cxlvi, 68, 630, 1271; extension of, 386–87*n*r, 392, 392*n*w; of governments, 390–91, 390–91*n*u; idea of, 389–93, 1272*n*t; of the individual, 1275–76; respect for, 389–90*n*t; rights of individuals *vs.* rights of society, 1271–73; in the United States, 389–93; universal, 386–87*n*r, 392, 392*n*v. *See also specific rights and freedoms*
Rive-de-Gier, mines of, 1226–27*n*k, 1235–37*n*y
River of the North, 1311
rivers, 1353. *See also specific rivers*
roads, lxxxii, lxxxiii, 106, 125*n*27, 1237, 1238*n*b; county roads, 125*n*26; road surveyors, 106, 118n14, 118*n*14; towns and, 125–26*n*29
Robinson, Mr., cii, 1007–8*n*b
Robson, John M., 402*n*a
Rocky Mountains, 34, 597, 658*n*(A)
Rodat. *See* Raudot, Rodat Claude
Roederer, P. L., *Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire de la société polie en France,* 807*n*m
Roger, Jean-François, 493*n*d
Rohan family, lxxviii
Roland-Marcel, Pierre, 386–87*n*r
Roman Catholicism. *See* Catholicism
Romans, 490, 509*n*a, 510, 636, 815–16*nn*a–b, 815–17, 994, 994*n*h, 1109, 1109*n*s; excess of, 1053*n*b; morality and, 1102; patriotism of, 1100*n*j; tyranny of, 511, 511*n*e. *See also* Rome, ancient
Rome, ancient, 15–16*n*w, 214, 458, 511*n*g, 514*n*o, 628–29*n*z, 732–33, 748–49, 748–49*n*f, 816, 816*n*b, 847, 941, 941*ng*; aqueducts in, 798; barbarians and, 535, 785, 1162*n*k, 1247*n*d; Christianity and, 748–49; despotism in, 1246–47; fall of, 1247*n*d; the family in, 1032; monuments in, 796–99, 796*n*a, 798–99; Roman literature, 806–7*n*k; science and, 786–87*n*p; tyranny in, 510–11, 511*n*g; virtue in, 1102. *See also* Romans
Rosanbo, Louise Le Peletier de (mother of Tocqueville), xlix, li–lii*n*34, liii, lxxi
Rosanbo, Louis Le Peletier de (maternal grandfather of Tocqueville), xlix, xlix*n*25

Rosanbo, Madame de. *See* Malesherbes, Marguerite Lamoignon de (maternal grandmother of Tocqueville)
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, cxxxiii–cxxxiv, cxxxiii*n*277, cxxxiv*n*278, cxliv*n*310, 10–12*n*q, 47–48*n*d, 58, 104*n*h, 186–87*n*a, 303*n*b, 712–13*n*c, 1133*n*c; *amour propre,* 881–82*n*b; anti-metropolitanism of, 454*n*j; *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne,* 260*n*r; *Contrat social,* 260*n*r, 384*n*n, 430*n*f, 453*n*g, 454*n*j, 466*n*v, 1226*n*j, 1249*n*e; on democracy as least costly form of government, 333*n*f; *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes,* 534*n*s, 1249*n*e; *Jugement sur le projet de paix perpétuelle,* 260*n*r; on mores, 466*n*v; praise for federal system, 260*n*r; recommendation to the Poles, 260*n*r; *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire,* 1297–98*n*c
royalists, lxxvi–lxxvii, lxxvii*n*101
Royal Library, 666–74*n*(F), 674
Royer-Collard, lxxxix, xciii, civ–cv, cxlviii, 816*n*b
Russia, 158–59*n*y, 610*n*77, 655–56, 655*n*5, 656–57*n*h, 1367
Russian settlements, 651

the Sabbath, 954–55, 954*n*a
sacrifice, 921–22, 921*n*j
Sagan-Cuisco, 1334*n*t, 1340–42, 1341, 1345
Sagan-Kuisko. *See* Sagan-Cuisco
Saginaw Bay, 1324–25
Saginaw, Michigan, 1321*n*o, 1324–26, 1340, 1342, 1346–59, 1346*n*y
Saginaw River, 1350, 1352–53, 1354–55, 1356–57
sailors, 362, 640*n*h, 644
Sainte-Beuve, Charles-Augustine, xlii, xc, cxlii–cxliii, 810–12*n*r, 856*n*g
Saint-Evremond, 810–12*n*r
Saint Francis River, 35
Saint-Louis, 650
Saint Louis River, 34–35. *See also* Mississippi River
Saint Peter (Minnesota) River, 35
saints, 6*n*h
Saint-Simon, Henri de, 532*n*r
Saint-Simonianism, 772*n*h, 960–61*n*j, 1062*n*b, 1199*n*o, 1204*n*f, 1209*n*c
salaries, 1025–26*n*a–b, 1025–30, 1027, 1027*n*d, 1028–29*n*g
Salvandy, Narcise-Achille, xc
Santo Domingo, 53
Sarce, Eugénie de, 515*n*a
Sauca Cano, José María, 308*n*j, 1268*n*o
Saulnier, Sébastian L.: "New Observations on the Finances of the United States," 156*n*w, 349–50*n*j; "Parallels Between the Public Expenditures of France and Those of the United States," 349–50*n*j
Sauteurs, 1329–30. *See also* Chippewa Indians
savages, xxvii, cxviii–cxvix, cxix–cxx, 39–40. *See also* barbarians
savings, 1227–28, 1227*n*m. *See also* banks
Say, Jean-Baptiste, lxiv, xcvii*n*158; *Cours d'économie politique,* 642–43*n*m; *Traité d'économie politique,* 642–43*n*m
Schermerhorn, Mr., 282–83*n*b, 627*n*x, 640*n*h
Schleifer, Alison Pedicord, xxiv
Schleifer, James T., xxi–xxiv, 76*n*f, 193*n*n, 453*n*f, 613*n*h, 621–22*n*v, 881–82*n*b, 1033–35*n*e, 1247*n*d, 1360–64, 1360*n*a, 1365*n*a
school commissioners, 106

schools, 67, 118*n*14. *See also* education
science, cxlv*n*315, 775–76*n*b; Americans and, 763–64*n*b, 763–74, 765–66*n*d, 775–77*nn*a–c, 775–87, 784*n*n; application of, 775–87, 781*n*h, 786–87*n*p; aristocracy and, 782–83, 786–87*n*p, 810*n*q; democracy and, 763–64*n*b, 763–87, 769–70*n*g, 775–77*nn*a–c, 786–87*n*p, 810*n*q; England and, 763–64*n*b; equality and, 763–64*n*b, 764–65, 775–76*n*b, 776; Europe and, 763–64*n*b; glory and, 781–82*n*j, 782; of laws, 775–76*n*c, 777–78*n*e; material interests and, 781–82*n*j; material well-being and, 786–87*n*p; motives that push men toward, 781–82*n*j; passion for, 781–82*n*j, 782; political liberty and, 778–79*n*f; public opinion and, 781; theory of, 775–87, 786–87*n*p; three parts of, 775–76*n*b, 777–78
scientific method, 702–3*n*n
Scotland, 1227*n*m, 1359
Scott, Walter: *The Bride of Lammermoor,* 1012–13*n*k; *Kenilworth,* 798–99*n*e, 1297–98*n*c
Scudéry, 807*n*m
the seas, freedom of
Seaton, Paul, xxiv
secession, 593–94
secondary powers, 1195, 1197, 1222, 1254, 1256–57*n*t
Sedgwick, Catherine Marie, 802–3*n*d
Sedgwick, Theodore, xxxiii, xlii, lxxxvii, lxxxvii*n*124, 84–85*n*a, 656–57*n*h
segregation, 548*n*c, 554. *See also* prejudice, racial
selectmen, 104–5, 106, 118–19*n*16, 118*n*14, 118*n*15, 119*n*18, 126, 126*n*p, 329, 685–96*n*(C)
self-interest, xxvi. *See also* interest
self-sufficiency, 708–9
the Senate, 180, 181–82, 196–200, 197*n*s, 199; direct election of, 321*n*k; elite nature of, 320–21; foreign affairs and, 366–67, 369*n*[*], 372–74*n*f; indirect election of, 321, 321*n*k; nullification doctrine and, 621; political crimes and, 200; political jurisdiction of the, 180–81; powers of, 200; the President and, 201, 202, 207*n*17; qualifications to serve in, 249; role in elections in case of tie, 221; treaties and, 200. *See also* Congress; legislative powers
senate (state), 136–38, 137*n*y, 682*n*(N)
Senior, Nassau William, xciv–xcv, 350–51*n*k, 382–83*n*j, 810–12*n*r
Sénonville, M. de, 534*n*17
sentiments, 691, 692, 697–98*n*a, 888*n*d, 894*n*q, 895*n*a, 900–901, 1272*n*t, 1284–85*n*k; aristocracy and, 900–901; democratic, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; equality of conditions and, 4; influence of democracy on, 871–985, 871*n*a; religion and, 705–7
separation of powers, cxlvi, cxlvii, 179, 182*n*c
serfs, 19–20
Sergeant, Thomas, *Constitutional Law,* 685–96*n*(C)
Serrin, William, 1355*n*b
servants, masters and, 1007–8*nn*a–b, 1007–19
servitude, cxix, cxxxviii, 122, 519, 1200*n*a, 1202, 1213, 1220*n*u, 1228*n*n, 1244, 1252–53, 1255–56, 1255–56*n*q, 1256–57*n*t, 1258–61, 1259–60*n*w, 1260*n*x, 1269–70, 1284*n*j, 1285; Christianity and, 548–49; liberty and, 1259–60*n*w, 1259–61; material

well-being and, 1228*n*3. *See also* slavery
settlers, 1321–24, 1332*n*o; English, 1348; European, 524–25, 1346–52, 1354–55, 1355*n*b; French, 1348, 1349; isolation of, 1322*n*p; misery of, 1322*n*p, 1323–24; religion and, 1323–24; Russian, 651; in Saginaw, 1346–52. *See also* pioneers
Sévigné, Madame de, 991–92
the sexes, 1053, 1054, 1057–58, 1057–58*n*f; aristocracy of, 727–28*n*b; division of labor, 1063–64, 1064*n*f; equality of, 1062–64*nn*a–e, 1062–67, 1062*n*b, 1064*n*h, 1067*n*m. *See also* men; women
Shakers, 1363, 1363*n*e
Shakespeare, William, 848*n*c, 850, 850*n*g, 868*n*e; *Henry V,* 803–4*n*
sheriffs, 114, 125, 684–85*n*(B), 685–96*n*(C)
Sicily, 1354
Siècle, 1239–40*n*d
Simon, Claude Gabriel, 1235–37*n*y
simplicity of means, cxxv*n*249
skepticism, 708*n*t, 965–68
slavery, lxxxiii, c, cviii*n*190, cxxxvi*n*287, 77, 517–19, 520*n*g, 548–82, 550*n*d, 550*n*f, 552*n*m, 552*n*n, 561, 578*n*f, 601–3, 1016–17, 1102*n*m, 1102*n*3; in antiquity, 550–51, 550*n*31, 550*n*e, 550*n*f, 551, 732–33, 733*n*h; beginnings of, 556, 556n33; Christianity and, 561; class and, 571–72; commerce and, 607*n*70; consequences of, 550, 550*n*f; danger to the future of the United States, 548–82; detriment to the economy, 556–61, 561–62*n*t; economic *vs.* philosophical/religious arguments against, 561–62*n*t; economy of, 561–62*n*t; education of slaves, 548*n*c; effects of, 52; emancipation from, 564–674, 570*n*x; establishment of, 52, 52*n*4; in Florida, 567; in Georgia, 567; influence on the production of wealth, 556–61, 561–62*n*t; inheritance law and, 563–64; introduction of, 556*n*33; in Kentucky, 558–61; in Louisiana, 559*n*38; in Maryland, 562, 562*n*39; mortality and, 565*n*41; in New England, 556; in New York, 556*n*33, 564; in the North, 556, 556*n*33, 562, 562*n*39, 568–71, 578–79; in Ohio, 557*n*35; in Pennsylvania, 562, 562*n*39; public opinion and, 556*n*33; race and, 550; racial prejudice and, 552–55, 552*n*n; religion and, 556; in the South, 52, 555, 556, 556*n*33, 562, 562*n*39, 563–64, 566–71, 578–82, 597, 597*n*1, 601–2, 606–7, 607*n*70; states and, 553–54*n*o; tobacco plantations and, 562*n*39; types of crops and, 566–68*n*w; in Virginia, 556, 556n33, 556*n*33, 562, 562*n*39; work and, 558–61, 563–64. *See also* abolition; servitude
Smith, George Washington, 414–15*n*v
Smith, John: *The General History of Virginia and New-England,* 42*n*16, 666–74*n*(F), 667; *History of Virginia from the First Settlements to the Year 1624,* 52–53*n*2
Smith, William: *History of New York,* 42*n*16, 666–74*n*(F), 674; *History of Virginia,* 666–74*n*(F), 668
smuggling, 677–78*n*(I)
sociability, 995–99, 995*n*b, 997, 997*n*d, 998–99*n*e
social charters, 58–59, 58*n*10, 61
social conventions, 709–10*n*u
social equality, 10–12*n*q. *See also* equality

social power, cxlvi, 1274, 1275
social sciences, cix*n*193
social state, xxvi, cviii–cx, cxii, cxvii, cxx*n*229, cxlv, cxlv*n*313, 74*n*b, 690–91*n*c, 709–10*n*u, 1262*n*b, 1284–85*n*k; of Anglo-Americans, 74–90; ideas and, 748–49*n*f; language and, 818–29, 819*n*c, 826; literature and, 812. *See also* democratic social state
social utility, 1273
society, lxv, lxvii–lxix, cxlvi; advantages of democracies for, 375–401; agitation of, 1089–92, 1089*n*a; appearance of, 1089–92, 1089*n*a; bonds of, 598–99n*z,* 598*n*y; classes of, 334; customs and, cviii*n*190; general laws of, 1094, 1094*n*c; ideas and, cvii–cxi, cviii*n*189, cviii*n*191; imaginary, 727–28*n*b; the individual and, 1271–76, 1276*n*z; monotony of, 1089–92, 1089*n*a; mores and, cviii*n*190; new, 1247*n*d; origins of, 46–47; political, 1187–89*nn*a–b, 1187–1294; real, 727–28*n*b; rights of, 1271–73; in the United States, 1308–9
Socrates, 959
soldiers, 1165–69, 1165*n*a, 1170–71*nn*b–c, 1170–75, 1272*n*t, 1291–92*n*
solitude, xxvii
the soul, 960–61*n*j; the body and, 963–64, 963*nn*a–b; immortality of, 958–59, 959*n*h, 962, 1126*n*r (*see also* the afterlife)
the South, cxxxvi*n*287, 51, 498–99*n*k, 597, 597*n*1, 603*n*[*], 614*n*k; abolition in, 572–75; agriculture and, 285, 595, 977; aristocracy in, 77–78, 563*n*u, 602–3; Blacks in, 597, 597*n*1, 1097–98*n*h; character of the, 52; commerce in, 607, 607*n*70; compared with other regions, 601–11; congressional representation of, 609–10; declining power of the, 609–10; dependence on the North, 596; duelling in, 1109*n*s; economy of, 560, 646; education in, 491; emancipation in, 562–72, 571*n*y, 572–75, 578–82; English character in, 52; in favor of free trade, 285; Indians in, 541, 543; inheritance laws in, 563–64; intermingling of races in, 572–75, 574*n*b; interracial marriage in, 555; lack of commerce in, 646, 646*n*[*]; magistrates in the, 133*n*39; mediocrity in leadership in, 319; the nullification doctrine and, 621–24; origins of Tocqueville's views on, 563*n*u; problem of abolition in, 569–72; racial prejudice in, 555; slavery in, 555–56, 556*n*33, 562, 562*n*39, 563–64, 566–71, 578–82, 597, 597*n*1, 601–2, 606–7, 607*n*70, 1016–17; tariff laws and, 620–24; tariffs and, 306, 610, 610*n*76; tobacco and, 611*n*78; Tocqueville's visit to, 620*n*t; the Union and, 620–24
South America, 37–38, 366, 456, 495, 496, 644, 645, 659*n*(B)
South Carolina, 267–68, 306, 481*n*5, 569, 569*n*45, 610, 610*n*76, 617*n*82, 620–24, 622*n*86, 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
the Southwest, 319, 364–65
sovereigns, 1221–44, 1275. *See also specific types of sovereigns*
sovereignty, 586*n*p, 1197–99; acts of, 583–90, 584–85*n*o, 586*n*p; aristocracy and, 1266–67; democracy and, 1265–66, 1265*n*e; divided, 238–43, 260–70, 273, 276, 583–90, 584–85*no,* 587*n*q, 587*n*r; division of powers and, 239; federal courts and, 236, 238–39; in France, 205–6, 208; of the human race, 410; of the states,

243; of the Union, 191–92*n*m, 191*n*j; in the United States, 205–6; U.S. Presidency and, 208. *See also* sovereignty of the people
sovereignty of the people, lxxxi, cix, cx*n*196, cxvii–cxviii, cxxxii–cxxxiii, 50, 61, 76, 93–94*n*e, 108–9, 109*n*p, 207*n*b, 277, 278, 292, 410, 412–13*n*s, 430*n*f, 561, 621–22*n*v, 633, 633*n*e, 1191*n*a, 1197–98*n*j, 1253, 1269; the American Revolution and, 92–93; as a civil principle, 633; in the English colonies, 92; in Europe, cix, 1197, 1197*n*g; in France, cix; in New England, 109, 113–14; as public opinion, cx; in the United States, cix, cix*n*194, 91–97, 1197, 1197*n*g. *See also* secondary power
Spain, 195, 287*n*h, 419, 552*n*n, 575; the Moors and, 542*n*x, 552*n*n, 575; in the New World, 50, 546–47, 546*n*28, 567, 644, 651, 798 (*see also* Spanish colonies); positions in, 1129*n*b, 1130*n*d; public works in, 1239–40*n*d
Spanish colonies, 495, 496, 547*n*a, 644, 645, 651
Sparks, Jared, lxxxix*n*132, xci*n*141, 99–100*n*c, 107*n*m, 145–46*n*g, 402*n*a, 621–22*n*v, 802–3*n*d
Sparta, 1065*n*h
Spencer, John C., 136*n*x, 186–87*n*a, 291*n*e, 404*n*e, 430*n*f, 530*n*q
Spinoza, Baruch, 477, 477*n*n
spirit of exclusion, 881–82*n*b
spiritualism, cxlv–cxlvi*n*315, 939–41, 939*nn*a–c, 939*nn*a–b, 941*n*f, 941*n*h, 954–62, 954*n*a, 956*n*d, 958*n*g, 960–61*n*j. *See also* religion
Spitz, David, 410*n*m
Spoelberch de Lovenjoul collection, xlii
stability, cxxxviii–cxxxix
Staël, Madame de, cxix, 656–57*n*h, 810–12*n*r, 1062*n*b; *De la littérature,* 827–28*n*k
the State, xxvii, cxxxv, 20–21, 143–44*n*d, 1197*n*8
state of nature, return to, cxxxiii, cxxxiv, cxxxiv*n*278, cxxxvii*n*288
the states, xxvii, cxlvi, 99, 139–41, 165, 261, 584–85, 619, 630, 1197*n*8; budgets of, 352, 352*n*11; commerce among, 195, 614; contract law and, 240, 240*n*31; counties and, 132–33; disproportionate growth among, 605–11; executive power in, 249–50; federal courts and, 241–44; government of the, 98–166; independence of, 196–99, 614; interdependence of, 595–97, 597*n*1; judicial power in, 250; legislative bodies of, 136–38, 248–49; litigation between, 237–38, 237*n*28, 244, 245; nationality of, 584*n*n; oppression of Indians by, 541–47, 544–45*n*26, 544*n*y; racial prejudice in, 553–54*n*o; regional differences among, 601–11, 603*n*[*], 614*n*k; religion in, lxix, cxxviii, cxxxviii, cxxxix, 467–78, 472*n*g, 478–88, 478*n*p, 479*n*q, 480*n*t, 481*nn*4–5, 482*n*u, 487–88*n*x, 487*n*w, 742–53, 939–41, 939*nn*a–c, 941*n*f, 954–62, 954*n*a; religious sects in, 939–41, 939*nn*a–c, 941*n*f, 1360–64, 1360*n*a; republican institutions in, 627–37, 628–29*n*z; respect for law in, 393–95, 393*n*y; revolution and, 1374; the rich in, 892; role in elections in case of no majority, 221*n*22; Russia and, 655–56, 656–57*n*h; separation of Church and State, 480; servant/master relationship in, 1013–17, 1014–15*n*m, 1007–

the states (*continued*)
8*n*b; slavery and, 553–54*n*o; social obligations in, 117; society in, 1308–9; Southwestern states, 76–77, 86; southwest of the Hudson, 77; sovereignty of, 240–41; sovereignty of the people in, 91–97, 1197, 1197*n*g; state constitutions, 246–50; state courts, 232–33, 235–36, 235–36*n*27, 240; state government, lxxxii, 162, 162*n*b, 165–66, 264, 588–90; state laws, 239–40, 267–70, 268–69*n*40; state militias, 274–75; suicide in, 947; taste for material well-being in, 930–31*nn*a–b, 930–34, 932–33*n*d; territory of, 591–92, 594–95, 605*n*66, 606*n*69, 617–18, 631, 649, 653–54, 654*n*2; theater in, 851–52, 851*n*h; towns and, 49–50, 99–114, 110, 132–33; tyranny of the majority in, 417–50, 427*n*a, 428–29*n*d; uniformity of, 614*n*j; uniform rule in, 1197–99; the Union and, 191–92*n*m, 191*n*j, 194–99, 205, 239–40, 252–55, 260–63, 267–70, 541–47, 583–94, 584–85*n*o, 584*n*n, 590–91*n*t, 598, 613–27 (*see also* sovereignty); unsettled land and, 617–18; vice in, 1103–4; virtue in, 920, 1103–4; visibility of development of, 47–48*n*d; war and, 273–75, 453; Western states, 86; wilderness in, 491–92, 638; women in, 819–21*n*d, 1048–51, 1062–64*nn*a–e, 1062–67, 1062*n*a, 1064*n*h, 1067*n*m, 1287–88*n*; work in, 1063–64, 1064*n*f. *See also* provincial liberties; the United States; *specific states*
The Statutes of the State of Tennessee, 133*n*39, 685–96*n*(C), 686
Stendhal, 656–57*n*h
Stith, William, *History of Virginia,* 51*n*2, 52–53*n*2
Stoffels, Charles, xxxviii, li*n*35, lxi, lxi*n*58, cii, cxxii–cxxiii, cxxii*n*242, cxliv*n*311, 810–12*n*r, 839*n*s, 845–46*n*b, 1368–72
Stoffels, Eugène, lxx–lxxi*n*85
Stone, 802–3*n*d
Storer, Mr., 404*n*e
Story, Joseph, 186–87*n*a, 235–36, 240*n*31, 240*n*32, 444*n*3; *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States,* 60–61*n*13, 188*n*2, 235–36*n*27, 237*n*28, 372–74*n*f, 685–96*n*(C); *Laws of the United States,* 198*n*14, 544–45*n*26
streetwalkers, 1057–58*n*f
Stuart, Mr., 419*n*b
style, 809, 809*n*o, 810–12*n*r
subjects *versus* citizens, 153–54
suffrage, 95–96, 95*n*h, 310–11, 313–14, 321, 336–37, 553–54*n*o, 561
sugar cane plantations, 559*n*38, 566–67, 595
suicide, 946, 947
Sumner, 1320*nn*
the Supreme Court, 233, 235–36*n*27, 237*n*28; elevated rank of, 244–46; Georgia's refusal to obey, 590–91*n*t; justices of, 245–46; litigation among states and, 244, 245
susceptibility, 1000–1004, 1000*n*a, 1005–6, 1005*n*a
Susquehanna River, 594
Sutter, Jean-François, 76*n*f
Swart, Koenrad W., 881–82*n*b
Swetchine, Madame, 480*n*t
Switzerland, 251, 253*n*37, 270–71*n*b, 590–91*t,* 605*n*65, 998–99*n*e, 1180–81*n*c, 1181
Sylla, 1160
symbols, xxxix–xli
sympathy, 989–90*n*f, 991–94, 1005–6, 1005*n*a

Tacitus, 441*n*v
talents, 1233–34*n*x
Tanner, Henry S., 536–37*n*18, 537–38*n*v
tariffs, lxxxii, 238, 267–68, 306, 610, 610*n*76, 618*n*r, 620–24. *See also* nullification affair
taste, 871*n*a, 1074*n*e
taste for material well-being. *See* material well-being
taxes, lxxxii, 125, 125*n*26, 131, 132*n*s, 194, 195, 253, 274, 333–40, 453; in England, 346; in France, 110; in New England, 110; poor tax, 337; public expenditures and, 345–48, 350; tax base, 345–46; tax revenues, 346–48; towns and, 110
teleology, cxviii, cxxxiv, 6*n*h
temperament, 1089–92
temperance laws, 365
temperance movement, 397*n*1, 901–2
Tennessee, 132*n*[*], 481*n*5, 533*n*14, 675–76*n*(G), 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
Terence, 550*n*31, 550*n*e
Teutons, 532, 532*n*r
Texas, 539–40*n*19, 651
theater, 845–46*nn*a–b, 845–52, 845*n*a, 849*n*d, 850*n*g, 851*n*h
Thebaid, 941, 941*ng*
theory. *See* political theory
Thiers, Louis-Adolphe, cii, 1126*n*q, 1161–62*n*j, 1239–40*n*d
thought, 416–20, 422, 492–93*n*7, 709, 721–23*n*r, 724, 1092*n*e. *See also* independence of thought
Tinnin, Alvis Lee, 550*n*e
tobacco plantations, 562*n*39, 566–67, 566–68*n*w, 595, 611*n*78
Tocqueville, Alexandrine de (sister-in-law), li*n*31, lix*n*55, 1295*n*a
Tocqueville, Alexis de, lii*n*35, lix*n*55, xciii, 53*n*n, 1116–17*n*b, 1302*n*j; Adams and, 214–15*n*k; in Alabama, lxix; in Albany, New York, lxix; Alexandrine de Tocqueville and, 1295*n*a, 1298*n*d, 1299*n*e; Ampère and, 699*n*d, 1133*n*c; arrival in the United States, 1365*n*b; attends Guizot's class at the Sorbonne, 18*n*a; in Baltimore, Maryland, lxix; at Baugy, ci, ci*n*169, cii–ciii; Beaumont and, 18*n*a, 696–97*n*a, 816*n*b, 1110–13*n*v, 1178*n*a, 1255*n*p; birth of, li*n*31; the Bourbons and, lix, lxxv, lxxvi; in Buffalo, New York, lxix; in Canada, lxix; Catholicism of, 480*n*t; Chabrol and, 18*n*a, 150*n*q, 167*n*a, 478*n*p, 631*n*c, 840–41*n*v, 1313–14*n*h; in the Chamber of Deputies, 386–87*n*r; at chateau de Gallarande, 515*n*a; in Cincinnati, Ohio, lxix; collaboration with Beaumont, lxxiv–lxxviii, lxxxv–lxxxvi, lxxxv–lxxxvi*n*120, xcviii, xcviii*n*162 (*see also under* Beaumont, Gustave de); Constitution of 1848 and, 137–39*n*z, 221–22*n*9, 221–22*n*p, 225*n*r; Corcelle and, 221–22*n*p, 480*n*t, 696–97*n*a, 755*n*e, 816*n*b, 856*n*g; correspondence of, xxxii–xxxiii, xxxii–xxxiii*n*9, xxxvii–xxxviii*n*20, xxxviii, xlii–xliii, lxiii*n*60, lxx–lxxi*n*84, lxxi, lxxiii, 317*n*g (*see also specific correspondents*); defends division of legislative power into two branches, 137–39*n*z; democratic ideal of, cxxiv; on despotism, 1247*n*d; in Detroit, Michigan, lxix; Édouard de Tocqueville and, 932–33*n*d, 1189*n*b (*see also under* Tocqueville, Édouard de); education of, l–li; elected deputy, civ; in England, xciv, xciv*n*152, xcvii*n*158, 81*n*s, 881–82*n*b, 1200*n*a, 1235–37*n*y; entry into the Académie des sciences

Tocqueville, Alexis de (*continued*)
morales et politiques, cii*n*171; faith of, cxxi–cxxii, cxlii–cxliii, 480*n*t; family history of, xlviii–liv; fatalism of, cxvi–cxvii, 10–12*n*q; the French Revolution and, cvi–cxvi; at the Great Lakes, lxix; Greg and, 281–82*n*a; Hall and, 819–21*n*d; handwriting of, xxxiii, xxxiii*n*11; heads Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 369*n*b; Hervé de Tocqueville and, 621–22*n*v (*see also under* Tocqueville, Hervé de (father)); hires Francis Lippitt, 84–85*n*a; hires Theodore Sedgwick, 84–85*n*a; history and, cxvi–cxx; ignorance about industrialization, 981*n*c; imprisonment of, l*n*28; the indemnities affair and, 372–74*n*f; influence of Pascal on, 712–13*n*c; interest in Russia, 656–57*n*h; interviews by, lxx; itinerary of, lxix; J. B. Say and, 642–43*n*m; journey to America, lxi–lxxiv, lxi*n*58, lxiv–lxv; as *juge auditeur* at Versailles, liv; as *juge suppléant,* lxi–lxiv; in Kentucky, lxix; Kergorlay and, 21nd, 32*n*x, 76*n*f, 78–79*n*o, 317*n*g, 599*n*a, 699–700*n*e, 712–13*n*c, 765–66*n*d, 1116–17*n*b, 1156–57*nn*d; knowledge of German, 1297–98*n*c; legal career of, liv–lvi, lxi–lxiv, lxxviii; literary taste of, 810–12*n*r; Louise Le Peletier de Rosanbo and, 547*n*a; in Louisiana, lxix; in Louisville, Kentucky, lxix; Madame de Circourt and, 1337–38*n*v; Madame Swetchine and, 480*n*t; marriage to Mary Mottley, xcix; in Maryland, lxix; meets Andrew Jackson, 454*n*h; meets Robert Walsh, 754*n*a; in Memphis, Tennessee, lxix; in Michigan, lxix; Mignet, 769–70*n*g; Mill and, 317*n*g; Milnes and, 747*n*e, 798*n*d, 1256–57*n*t; mission from the French government, 2na; in Montgomery, Alabama, lxix; in Nashville, Tennessee, lxix; on need for a new political science, 16–17*n*x; in New England, lxix; in New Orleans, Louisiana, lxix; in Newport, Rhode Island, lxv; in New York, lxix, 461*n*q; in Norfolk, Virginia, lxix; notes of, xxxii–xxxiii, xxxiii*n*12, xxxvi, lxix–lxx, lxx–lxxi*n*84, lxx*n*81; objective of journey to the United States, 2na; in Pennsylvania, lxix; in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, lxix; philosophical ideal of, cxxiv; plan for establishing a review with Beaumont and others, lxxvii–lxxviii; plans to visit England's penal institutions, lxxviii–lxxxiv; Plato and, cxxi*n*237; political science and, cxi–cxii, cxvi; politics and, lix, lix*n*54, lx–lxi, lxiii, cvi–cxvi, 1256–57*n*t; in Pontiac, Michigan, lxix; the press and, lxv; on prisons, 1247*n*d; purpose of journey to America, lxv; receives château de Tocqueville and title, c; Reeve and, 718*n*m; religion and, cxxi–cxxii, cxlii–cxliii, 480*n*t; remembered in Saginaw, 1346*n*y; return to France, lxxiv–lxxv; as rhetorician, 10–12*n*q; in Rhode Island, lxv; Royer-Collard and, 816*n*b; in Saginaw, Michigan, lxix, 1346*n*y; science of administration and, 332*n*d; the South and, lxix*n*78, 563*n*u, 620*n*t; speech at the *Académie des sciences morales et politiques,* 16–17*n*x; Stoffels and, 810–12*n*r, 1368–72; in Switzerland, 270–71*n*b; in Tennessee, lxix; in Virginia, lxix;

in Washington, D.C., lxix. *See also specific works*
Tocqueville, Alexis de, works of, 1215*n*p, 1233–34*n*x; *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution,* civ–cv, cvii, cvii*n*188, cx, cxii*n*201, cxlii, 104*n*h, 650*n*d, 739*n*c, 881–82*n*b, 1235–37*n*y, 1297–98*n*c; "De la classe moyenne et du peuple," xxxvii–xxxviii*n*20; *De la démocratie en France,* 18–19*n*a; *Écrits et discours politiques,* 650*n*d; *A Fortnight in the Wilderness,* xxxvii, 1295*n*a, 1303–59, 1303*n*a; *Journey to Lake Oneida,* xxxvi–xxxvii, cxv, cxv*n*216, 1295–1302, 1295*n*a, 1338*n*w; *Mémoire sur le paupérisme,* xciv–xcv, xciv*n*151, cii*n*171, 10–12*n*q, 78–79*n*o, 1227*n*m; morals, 1059*n*h; parliamentary report on slavery, 570*n*x; on pauperism, 980*n*a; *Of the Penitentiary System in the US and Its Application to France,* lxxiv–lxxviii, 2*n*a, 650*n*d, 901*n*[*]; "Rapport fait à l'Académie des sciences morales . . .", 270–71*n*b; *Rapport fait au nom de la commission chargée d'examiner la proposition de M. Tracy relative aux esclaves des colonies,* 570*n*x; "Report on the proposed law concerning the extraordinary credits asked for Algeria," 102*n*e, 145–46*n*g, 536*n*u; *Rubish,* xxxii, xxxii*n*6, xxxii*n*7, xxxii*n*8; *Social and Political State of France,* xcvii; *Souvenirs,* cxxi, 137–38*n*z, 225*n*r; *Visit to Kenilworth,* 798–99*n*e, 1302*n*j; *Voyages en Angleterre, Irlande, Suisse et Algérie,* 81*n*s, 881–82*n*b, 1235–37*n*y; *Voyages en Sicile et aux États-Unis,* 1295*n*a; writings in the Quaker Collection, 548*n*c
Tocqueville, château, xlviii*n*24, xlix, li*n*33
Tocqueville, Christian de, xxxi
Tocqueville, Édouard de (brother), xlvii*n*22, xlix*n*26, li*nn*31–32, lii, liv, lxv–lxvii, lxix*n*78, lxx–lxxi*n*84, lxxv*n*98, lxxxviii, xcix, ci*n*169, 122*n*k, 142–43*n*c, 339*n*t, 620*n*t, 895*n*b, 932–33*n*d, 1090*n*c, 1110–13*n*v, 1189*n*b, 1226–27*n*k; on centralization and decentralization, 142–43*n*c; commentaries of, 5*n*e, 6*n*g, 8*n*m, 8*n*k, 15*n*v, 17*n*y, 19*n*b, 25*n*h, 26*n*k, 27*n*m, 29*n*q, 31*n*u, 40*n*j, 74*n*a, 77–78*n*k, 83*n*x, 94*n*f, 97*n*m, 117*n*c, 123*n*m, 123*n*n, 124*n*25, 140*n*a, 142–43*n*c, 159*n*z, 205–6*n*a, 215–17*n*m, 228–29*n*x, 254*n*j, 261*n*x, 261*n*u, 261*n*w, 269*n*a, 285*n*e, 333–34*n*f, 334*n*h, 338*n*r, 346*n*c, 348–49*n*h, 357*n*p, 365*n*y, 375*n*a, 426*n*j, 434*n*m, 487*n*w, 500*n*n, 502*n*q, 502*n*r, 505*n*v, 508*n*z, 510*n*d, 905–6*nn*a–b, 919*n*e, 937*n*e, 1019*n*o, 1062*n*b, 1093*n*a, 1095*n*d, 1097–98*n*h, 1142–43*n*m; criticisms of, 5*n*e
Tocqueville, Hervé de (father), xlii, xlix, l–li, l*n*27, l*n*29, l*n*30, liii–liv*n*39, liii*n*38, lix, lix*n*55, lxv, 231–32*n*z, 1110–13*n*v; commentaries by, 5*n*e, 6*n*g, 8*n*m, 8*n*k, 13*n*s, 15*n*v, 17*n*y, 19*n*c, 24*n*g, 25*n*h, 26*n*k, 27*n*m, 29*n*q, 31*n*u, 37*n*e, 40*n*j, 53*n*n, 74*n*a, 75*n*e, 77–78*n*k, 77*n*j, 78*n*m, 80*n*q, 83*n*x, 84*n*z, 85–86*n*f, 90*n*m, 90*n*h, 94*n*f, 95*n*g, 97*n*m, 102*n*e, 104*n*j, 116*n*b, 122*n*k, 124*n*25, 126*n*p, 132*n*t, 133*n*u, 188*n*c, 189*n*d, 189*n*f, 199*n*v, 212–13*n*g, 212*n*f, 215–17*n*m, 223*n*q, 227*n*v, 228*n*x, 252*n*h, 254*n*j, 261*n*x, 261*n*u, 261*n*w, 269*n*a,

Tocqueville, Hervé de (*continued*) 290*n*c, 304*n*d, 324*n*r, 325*n*t, 327–28*n*y, 335–36*n*n, 335*n*m, 335*n*j, 338*n*r, 339*n*t, 342*n*w, 343*n*x, 345*n*a, 348–49*n*h, 356*n*o, 357*n*p, 357*n*q, 362–63, 370*n*c, 379*n*f, 380*n*g, 383*n*m, 385*n*p, 402*n*a, 403*n*c, 405*n*f, 421*n*c, 429*n*e, 433*nn*g–j, 434*n*k, 462*n*r, 468*n*a, 469*n*d, 470*n*f, 479*n*r, 484*n*v, 487*n*w, 491*n*b, 492*n*c, 501*n*o, 505*n*t, 507*n*x, 508*n*y, 511*n*g, 676*n*f; *Coup d'oeil sur l'administration française,* 99–100*n*c, 145–46*n*g; criticisms of, 5*n*e; *De la charte provinciale,* 99–100*n*c; on French administration, 145–46*n*g; on inheritance laws, 78–79*n*o
Tocqueville, Hippolyte de (brother), li*n*31, lix, lxxv, lxxvii*n*99, 5*n*e
Tocqueville, Hubert de (nephew), li*n*31
Tocqueville, Louise de. *See* Rosanbo, Louise Le Peletier de (mother of Tocqueville)
Tocqueville, René de (nephew), li*n*31
Tocqueville, village of, xlviii, xlviii*n*24
Tocqueville family, xxxiv*n*15, liv–lv. *See also specific family members*
Todds, John, 1333*n*s
toleration, lxxxiii, 602, 602*n*c
topicality, xlvii–xlviii
Toulon prison, lxxiv–lxxv
towns, 99–114, 99*n*3, 103–4, 261, 630; budgets of, 352, 352*n*11; counties and, 119, 119*n*18, 125; crude elements of, 101, 101*n*d; French, 119, 119*n*f; granting of freedom of the, 6*n*h; independence of, 109–10; in India, 102*n*g; individuality of, 108–9, 110; institution of, 9; lack of representation in, 104*n*h; liberty and, 101–3, 101*n*d, 109, 121*n*h; maintenance of roads by, 125–26*n*29; in Massachusetts, 103*n*1; obedience of state laws, 125–26, 125–26*n*29; obligation of, 110; public offices in, 105; rights and duties in, 113*n*w; roads and, 125–26*n*29; social duties and, 110; sovereignty of the people in, 113–14; states and, 110, 125, 132–33; taxes and, 110; town districts, 103–4; town duties, 113; town government, 49–50, 65–66, 102–3; town institutions, 102–3, 162*n*b, 466; town liberties, 101–3, 101*n*d, 109, 121*n*h, 307, 630, 632; town life, 108–10, 130–31; town magistrates, 106–7, 107*n*6, 118, 120; town meetings, lxxxi, 105; town officials, 106–7, 107*n*6, 118, 118*n*14, 120, 129*n*36; town powers, 104–5*n*2, 104–7; town spirit, 106*n*k, 110–14; town treasurers, 106; in the United States, 132. *See also* cities; municipalities; New England towns
trade, 7, 306. *See also* commerce
transubstantiation, 822–23*n*f
treaties, 200, 244
Treatise on the Rules of Civil Actions, 443*n*2
Trinity College, Cambridge, xlii
Trumbull, Benjamin, *A Complete History of Connecticut, civil and ecclesiastical, 1630-1764,* 666–74*n*(F), 673
trustees, 685–96*n*(C)
truth, cxxii*n*240, cxxiii*n*244, 714–15, 715*n*f, 716*n*h, 732; absolute, cxxi–cxxiv, cxxii*n*240, 3*n*a, 716*n*h; abstract, 750; demonstrated, cxxiii; impossibility of knowing the, cxxi–cxxiv, cxxii*n*240, cxxiii*n*245; passion for, 781–82*n*j, 782
Tudors, 446
Turkey, 158–59*n*y, 231–32*n*z, 828*n*m
tyranny, 162, 185, 895–96, 948–50*n*c,

1187–89*n*a, 1245*n*b, 1293–94*n*; democratic, 360; distinguished from arbitrariness, 415–16, 415–16*n*x; as the greatest evil, 3*n*a; legislative, 185; legitimate, 631; of the majority (*see* the majority, tyranny of); revolutionary spirit and, 1273*n*u; in small nations, 255–56; in the United States, 418–19, 419–20*n*b. *See also* absolute monarchy; despotism
Tyrians, 948–50*n*c, 950

ultras, lxxv–lxxvi, cvi
unbelief, 475–76, 476*n*3, 482, 488, 755, 965–68, 965*n*a
uncertainty, cxxv
uniformity, 614*n*j, 1187–89*n*a, 1194*n*a, 1195, 1200–1205, 1223, 1275, 1281–82
uniform legislation, 1197–99, 1199*n*m
uniform power, 1197–99, 1199*n*m
uniform rule, 1195, 1197–99, 1292*n*c
the Union, 98–99; as an accident, 627–28; attributions of, 193–95; chances of lasting, 582–627; dangers to, 582–627, 596–97*n*x; dismemberment of, 613*n*h, 627, 647, 653; displacement of forces as greatest danger to, 605–11; disproportionate growth among states and regions, 605–11; division of sovereignty in, 583–90, 584–85*n*o; enemies of, 614; future of, lxxxii; interdependence of regions in, 595–97, 597*n*1; nationality of, 584*n*n; probable fate of, 582–627; the South and, 620–24; sovereignty of, 191–92*n*m, 191*n*j, 238–40; the states and, 191–92*n*m, 191*n*j, 195, 196–99, 205, 239–40, 252–55, 260–63, 267–70, 541–47, 583–94, 584–85*n*o, 584*n*n, 590–91*n*t, 598, 613–27, 615–18, 624–25; strengths of, 626; weakness of, 267, 590–91*t,* 620, 626. *See also* the United States; U.S. federal government
Union Party, 622*n*86
Unitarianism, lxxxiii, 754*n*b, 1351
the United States, 1212*n*k, 1215*n*p; accidental or providential factors in the survival of, 453–65; ambition in, 1116–18*nn*a–f, 1116–28; as an example of democracy, 504–12, 513*n*m, 513*n*n; the appearance of society in, 1089–92, 1089*n*a; the aristocratic party in, 287; Capitol of, 797; as center of commerce in the Americas, 645–46; circulation of thought in, 492–93*n*7; cities in, 454–55, 454*n*1, 454*n*j; civil society in, 2na, 633–34; climate of, 453*n*f, 654; coastline of, 637; compared to France, 596; Constitution of (*see* the U.S. Constitution); corruption in, 358; courtier spirit in, 420–23, 420*n*d; distinguished from democracies in general, 500–504; division into particular societies, 1068–70, 1068*nn*a–b; immigration to, 27, 49–50, 49*n*e, 53–54; England and, lxxxiv, 646, 767–68*n*f; as entirely middle class, cxxviii*n*257, cxxviii–cxxix; Europe and, 638, 682–83*n*(O), 768, 805*n*j; European emigration to, 1323–24; expansion of, 86, 654; federal form of government in, 465–66; foreign policy of, 372–74*n*f; four types of budgets in, 352, 352*n*11; France and, lxvi, 371, 372–74*n*f; free space in, 49*n*e; the French Revolution and, 371; the future of, 649–57; general beneficial tendency of laws in, 377–84; homogeneity of facilitating federal system, 270–72; idea of rights in, 389–93; inability to enforce conscription, 361–62, 362*n*v, 362*n*u;

the United States (*continued*)
inability to register sailors, 362; intellectual influence of England on, cxxviii; intellectual movement in, 696–870; isolation of, 49*n*e, 209, 275–76, 453, 495; lack of intellectual work in, 87–88; lack of a large capital, 454–55, 454*n*1; lack of outstanding leadership in public affairs, 314–18; lack of theater in, 851*n*h; language as unifying bond, 49–50; leveling of civilization in, 1309–11; maritime power of, 639–47; Mexico and, 651; middling level of human knowledge in, 87–88; as a "mirror" of France, cvii, cvii*n*185; as model of social revolution, 26–30; national character of, 420–23; naval forces of, 647; as a new country, 49*n*e; as the non-intellectual part of Europe, cxxviii–cxxix; North-South division of, 52*n*j; as part of the middle classes of England, 767–68*n*f; physical conditions of, lxvii, lxviii, lxix, cxii, cxxviii, 453, 453*n*f, 456–58, 494–500, 654; power that American democracy exercises over itself, 364–66; principal causes that maintain the democratic republic of, 451–514; prosperity of, 615–16. *See also* America; the states; the Union; the U.S. federal government; *specific cities; specific parts of government; specific regions; specific states*
unity, cxxxv, cxxxvii–cxxxviii, cxliv, cxliv*n*309, 758, 758*n*d, 1187–89*n*a, 1201–2*n*c*n*b, 1202, 1204*n*f, 1214–15, 1215*n*o, 1223*n*f, 1228*n*n, 1235–37*n*y, 1260*n*x, 1275, 1292*n*
universal rights, 386–87*n*r, 392, 392*n*v
universal suffrage, 95–96, 95*n*h, 310–11, 313–14, 321, 336–37, 561
L'Université catholique, 1124–25*n*p
University of Paris, 6*n*h
upper classes, 363, 512*n*j, 754*n*a. *See also* aristocracy
the U.S. Constitution, 170–71, 186–276, 187–88*n*a, 188*n*2, 188*n*b, 190*n*5, 190*n*h, 191–92*n*m, 191*n*k, 191*nk,* 192–93*nn*6–8, 192*n*6, 252, 403*n*1, 583, 615, 621, 624–25, 1375; amendments to, 590–91*n*t; basis in laws of New England, 64–65; compared to other federal constitutions, 251–55; on Congress, 196–200; executive powers in, 201–3, 249–50; Federalists and, 282, 284; federal powers, 195–250; on foreign affairs, 372–74*n*f; foreign affairs and, 366–67, 367*n*16, 369*n*[*], 371; historical background of, 186–90; on the House of Representatives, 196–200, 198*n*14; interpretation of in favor of the states, 616; judicial powers in, 229–50, 441*n*v; jury system and, 685–96*n*(C); legislative powers, 196–200, 247–49; militias and, 274–75; on political jurisdiction, 682*n*(N); population growth and, 652; power of the majority in, 403–4, 403*nb*; on the Presidency, 249–50; respect for, 634; on the Senate, 196–200, 197*n*s; seventeenth amendment, 321*n*k; sovereignty of the federal government in, 252–55; summary picture of, 191–92; superiority to state constitutions, 246–50; war and, 273–74
the useful, 788–89, 788*n*a, 789*n*c, 923–25*n*n, 978–79*n*j, 1282*n*f
useful arts, 788–90, 789–90*n*d, 791*n*e, 798*n*c
the U.S. federal government, 313–74, 403*n*1, 588–94, 626; attributions of, 193–95; budget of, 352, 352*n*11; con-

solidation of power by, 615; decline of, 616, 617; economy of, 343–44; Indians and, 541–47, 542*n*24, 544–45*n*26, 544*n*25, 618; infrastructure and, 616–71; lack of merit in those governing, 314–18; movement toward centralization, 626–27; as proprietor of unsettled land, 617–18; retreat of, 616–17; seen as a nuisance, 616; sovereignty of, 615; strengths and weaknesses of, 588–89, 589*n*s, 590–91*t*; unsettled land and, 617–18; weakening of, 612–27, 613*n*h. *See also* the Union
utility. *See* the useful

Valois dynasty, 24*n*g
vanity, 1086–88, 1086*n*e
Van Rensselaer family, 85*n*b
Varro (Marcus Terentius or Gaius Terentius), 1100*n*j
vassals, 6*n*h
Vatine, 1299*n*f. *See also* La Croix de Watines family
Vattemare, Alexander, 186–87*n*a
Vaud, Switzerland, 590–91*t*
Vaux, Robert, 81*n*s
vengeance, 1109*n*s
Vermont, 52*n*5, 652, 675–76*n*(G), 677*n*(H), 682*n*(N)
Verplanck, Gulian Crommelin, 802–3*n*d
vice, 356–59, 1094, 1095–96*n*e, 1103–4, 1233–34*n*x, 1282
Villeneuve-Bargemont, Alban de, *Économie politique chrétienne, ou recherches sur la nature et les causes de paupérisme,* xcvii*n*158, 642–43*n*m, 980*n*a
Vincennes (city), 539–40*n*19, 650
violence, 418–19
Virginia, 51–53, 132*n*[*], 595; act of cession by, 617*n*82; Blacks in, 569, 569*n*45; commerce in, 607*n*70; Constitution of, 481*n*5; electoral conditions in, 677*n*(H); English settlers in, 52–53*n*2; histories of, 666–74*n*(F), 667–68; House of Delegates, 184; Indians in, 529*n*10; law of entail in, 675–76*n*(G); nullification affair and, 623*n*88; political jurisdiction in, 184, 682*n*(N); population growth in, 608–9, 608–9*n*74, 608*n*73; population of, 610*n*77, 610*n*e; representation in Congress, 608–9; settlers in, 51–52, 51–52*n*2; slavery in, 556, 556n33, 556*n*33, 562, 562*n*39; supreme court of, 235–36*n*27; tariff laws and, 620–24
Virtanen, Reino, 800–801*n*b, 802–3*n*d, 813*n*b
virtue, 921–22, 923–25*n*n, 1094, 1094*n*c, 1095–96*n*e, 1095*n*d, 1096*n*f, 1110–13*n*v, 1233–34*n*x, 1282; aristocracy and, 919, 922*n*k; doctrine of interest well understood and, 921–22, 922*n*k; liberty and, 509, 509*n*a; in republics, 509, 509*n*a; in Rome, 1102; in the United States, 920, 1103–4. *See also* morals
Voiture, 807*n*m, 814*n*c
Volney, lxiv, lxxiii; *Tableau des États-Unis,* 524*n*4, 531*n*12, 594; *Tableau du climat et du sol des Etats-Unis,* 539–40*n*19
Voltaire, 158–59*n*y, 704
Voorhees, P. F., 576*n*d
voting rights. *See* electoral rights

Walsh, Robert, 754*n*a, 802–3*n*d
Wampanoags, 529*n*10
war, 272–73, 272*n*c, 453, 994*n*h, 1153–64, 1165*nn*a–b, 1167*n*1, 1291–92*n*; aristocracy and, 1178–80*n*1, 1182–83,

war (*continued*)
1182*n*e, 1187–89*n*a; centralization and, 1160–62, 1161–62*n*j, 1215–16; civil wars, 1178*n*a, 1185–86, 1186*n*3; confederations and, 1186*n*3; continental, 682–83*n*(O); democracy and, 1153–64, 1153*n*a, 1160*n*g, 1161–62*n*j, 1162*n*k, 1178–80*nn*1–2, 1178–86, 1178*n*a, 1180*n*b, 1182*n*e, 1184*n*h, 1186*n*3; equality and, 1178–80*nn*1–2, 1178–86, 1178*n*a, 1180*n*b, 1182*n*e, 1184*n*h, 1186*n*3; Europe and, 273, 1178–80*nn*b, 1180–81, 1180–81*n*c; maritime, 682–83*n*(O); property and, 1183–84; the United States and, 273–75, 361–62, 362*n*v, 362*n*u; the U.S. Constitution and, 273–74. *See also specific wars*
Warden, D. B., 666–74*n*(F), 674
War of 1812, 274, 275, 414*n*4, 520*n*1, 591*n*53, 620
War of Independence. *See* American Revolution
warrior mores, 1291–92*n,* 1292
wars: civil wars, 1178*n*a, 1185–86, 1186*n*3
Warville, Brissot de, *Examen critique des "Voyages dans l'Amérique septentrionale" de M. le marquis de Chastellux,* 550*n*e
Warwick castle, 798–99*n*e
Wash Hood, 542*n*23
Washington, D.C., lxxxiii, 606, 608
Washington, George, 190, 190*n*4, 190*n*h, 367–68, 368[*], 371, 371*n*17, 372–74*n*f, 541, 609*n*75
wealth, 1228, 1235–37*n*y, 1286–87*n*; acquisition of, lxvi–lxviii, lxxxiii, 85, 766–68, 767–68*n*f, 772*n*h, 930–34, 932–33*n*d, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d; aristocracy and, 1090; components of, 350–51, 350–51*n*k; democracy and, 85–86*n*e, 973*n*c, 973*n*1, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f, 1138*n*h; equality of conditions and, 1228; governance and, 974–76, 974*n*d; influence of slavery on, 556–61; love of, 1090, 1090*n*c, 1091, 1104; power and, 974–76, 974*n*d, 975*n*f; rise of personal, 7–9; slavery and, 561–62*n*t. *See also* money; the rich
Weber, Max, 31*n*t
Webster, Daniel, 621–22*n*v, 802–3*n*d
well-being, cxxxiii, cxxxvi*n*284, cxli, cxlv, 751, 781*n*h, 918–25, 1291–92*n*. *See also* interests; interest well understood, doctrine of; material well-being
the West, cxii–cxiv, 498–99*n*k, 597, 658*n*(A); agriculture in, 595, 977; congressional representation of, 609–10; dependence on the North, 596; education in, 491; growth in, 607; increasing power of, 610; influence of letters in the, 7*n*h; lack of Blacks in, 566; migration toward, 458–59, 460, 476–77, 652–53; population growth in, 610
West, Paul, 800–801*n*b
wheat, 595
Whiskey Tax rebellion, 590–91*n*t
White, Paul Lambert, xxxi, xxxi*n*3
whites: Blacks and, 548–82, 548*n*30, 580–81; mortality of, 565*n*41; population growth of, 566. *See also* Anglo-Americans
Wilberforce, Canada, 576*n*d
the wilderness, xxvii, cxiv–cxv, cxv*n*216, 36, 36*n*d, 43–44, 496, 498*n*j, 505, 617–18, 835–37; as Americans' primary obstacle, 655–56; circulation of thought in, 492; expansion into, 653; in North America, 457–58, 459, 460, 461–62, 491–92, 638, 655–56; in South America,

495; in the United States, 491–92, 638. *See also* the frontier
will, 91, 1251–52, 1251*n*m, 1259
Williams, Oliver, 1326–27, 1326*n*q
Williams, Roger, *Key into the Language of the Indians of New England,* 42*n*15, 1352
Willis, Nathaniel Parker, 802–3*n*d
Winthrop, Delba, 68–69, 68*n*41
women, cxliv*n*310, 1251*n*m; American, 819–21*n*d, 1048–51, 1062–64*nn*a–e, 1062–67, 1062*n*a, 1064*n*h, 1067*n*m, 1287–88*n*; Catholicism and, 1041–42*n*c, 1042; Christianity and, 1044–45, 1044*n*f; education of, 1041–47, 1065*nn*g–h; English, 819–21*n*d, 1048*n*b, 1053, 1053*n*b, 1064*n*e, 1066*n*j; equality with men, 1062–64*nn*a–e, 1062–67, 1064*n*h, 1067*n*m; in Europe, 1062*n*a, 1062*n*b, 1063, 1063*n*c, 1065–66; in France, 1066; in Germany, 1066*n*j; honor and, 1110–13*n*v; influence on politics, 819–21*n*d; marriage and, 1048–51, 1048*n*a, 1054–55*n*1, 1054–57, 1110–13*n*v; men and, 1053, 1054; mores and, 473–74, 1041–42*n*c, 1041–47, 1052–54*nn*a–b, 1052–61, 1057–58*n*f, 1059*n*h, 1066; pioneers, 1287–88*n,* 1318–19; prostitutes, 1057–58*n*f; Protestantism and, 1041–42*n*c, 1042; religion and, 1041–42*n*c, 1042, 1044–45, 1044*n*f, 1048–49; sex and, 1053, 1057–58*n*f; subjugation of, 727–28*n*b; as wives, 1048–51, 1048*n*a. *See also* girls
woods, 1336–40, 1337–38*n*v
work, 969–71, 969*n*a; division of labor between the sexes, 1063–64, 1064*n*f; slavery and, 558–61, 563–64; in the United States, 1063–64, 1064*n*f
workers, 1025–26*n*a–b, 1025–30, 1027*n*d. *See also* labor; working classes
working classes, 642–43, 642–43*n*m. *See also* labor
writers. *See* authors
Wynne, Marjorie G., xliv

Yale University, xxxi, xxxi*n*2, xxxi*n*4, xliv, 5*n*e, 372–74*n*f, 697–98*n*a

Zeitlin, Irving M., 570*n*x, 1133*n*c
Zetterbaum, Marvin, 10–12*n*q
Zuckert, Catherine, xxiv